

# COPD: The Basics

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# HOUSEKEEPING

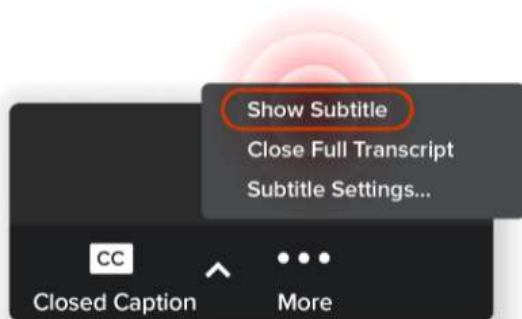
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To turn on CC please go to bottom of your zoom screen and click the CC button and click show subtitle.

### 2. Show / hide captions

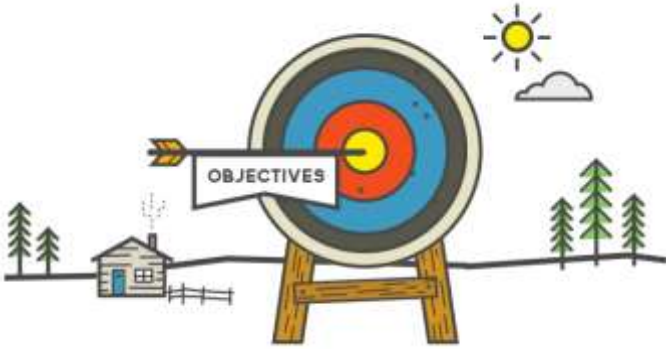
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- The webinar today will be approx. 30 minutes with time for questions to follow
- If you have any questions please use the chat/question section at the bottom of the Zoom screen to ask, to ensure your privacy. We will be monitoring your questions.

Please be advised this presentation is being recorded and any questions you post in the chat section will be answered during the recording (your personal information will not be shared).



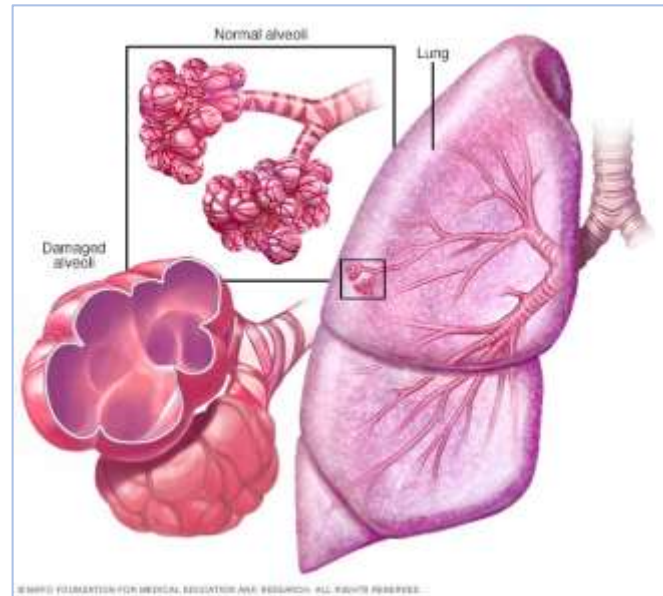
## Upon completion of this webinar, you will have learned about the following topics:

- What is COPD including causes, symptoms, diagnosis, treatment, medications and triggers
- What is a COPD flare-up, including how to prevent and treat
- Breathing techniques and positioning to help with shortness of breath
- Energy conservation
- Coping with anxiety
- COPD and exercise
- Chronic disease and advance care planning

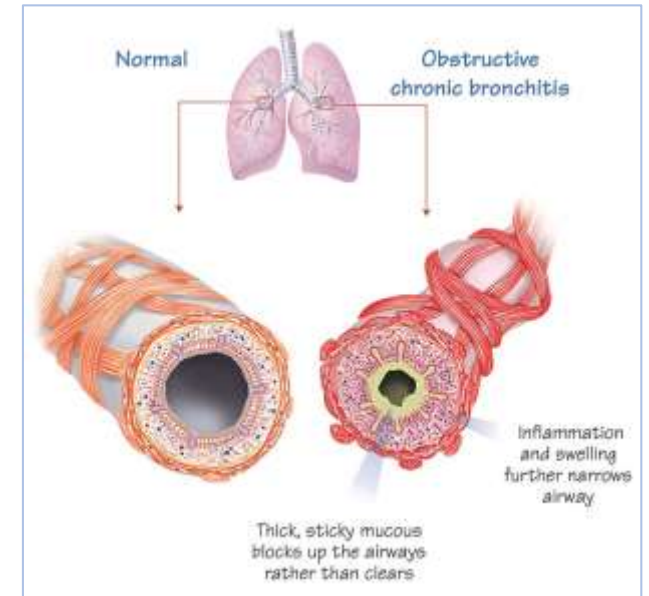
# WHAT IS COPD?

## Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

Emphysema



Chronic Bronchitis



# WHAT CAUSES COPD?

## The number one cause of COPD: SMOKING

Other causes can include:

- Second-hand smoke
- Air pollution (dust or chemicals)
- Repeated childhood lung infections
- Severe asthma
- Asthma combined with smoking
- Alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency (rare genetic disorder)



# WHAT ARE THE MAIN SYMPTOMS OF COPD?

Feeling short of breath (more with physical activity)

Fatigue or feeling tired

A cough lasting more than 3 months

Cough with mucus production

Wheezing

More frequent infections (cold, flu, pneumonia) and longer recovery time

# HOW IS COPD DIAGNOSED?

- Health history completed by your healthcare provider
- Spirometry
- Chest x-ray
- Oximetry
- Other tests

# HOW IS COPD TREATED?

- Quitting smoking
- Take your COPD medications as directed
- Stay up to date on your vaccines: flu, pneumonia, Covid 19
- Oxygen therapy





# COPD MEDICATIONS

There are a variety of oral and inhaled medications that can improve your COPD symptoms and quality of life

- Inhalers – bronchodilators and combined bronchodilators and anti-inflammatories
- Antibiotics
- Supplemental oxygen
- Vaccines (flu, Covid 19, pneumonia)





# Inhalers (puffers)

Inhalers are the main type of medication for COPD

Reduces the risk of COPD flare-ups

Bronchodilators: open up airways and makes breathing easier

- E.G. short acting: Ventolin (rescue inhaler), Atrovent
- Long-acting: Incruse, Spiriva (need to be taken every day)

Combination long-acting bronchodilators and/or corticosteroids

- Contain two to three medications in one inhaler
- Need to be taken every day
- E.G. Advair, Breo, Symbicort, Anoro, Duaklir, Inspiolto, Ultibro, Trelegy

# IMPORTANCE OF INHALER TECHNIQUE

- Proper inhaler technique is essential to manage and prevent symptoms like shortness of breath and wheezing
- Using certain inhalation devices and maintaining good technique can be challenging for some people
- Learning the right technique may be difficult but it's important for the medication to get to your airways and work properly
- There are many different types of inhalers- too many to review here. Please speak with your doctor, NP, nurse or pharmacist to ensure you have proper inhaler technique for the inhalers you use

## ORAL MEDICATIONS

- **Corticosteroid pills:** used for a short period of time – usually during a COPD flare-up
- **Antibiotics:** may be prescribed for bacterial infections in the lungs which lead to a COPD flare-up





Let's talk about

# MEDICATION ADHERENCE

If you **SKIP, CHANGE, OR IGNORE YOUR MEDICINE**, it can be **BAD FOR YOUR HEALTH.**

## TAKE YOUR MEDICINE...

...in **RIGHT DOSES**



...the **RIGHT WAY**



...at the **RIGHT TIME**

### HELPFUL TIPS



Use a **WEEKLY PILLBOX**



**CREATE REMINDERS** with notes or alarms



**ASK YOUR CARE TEAM** whether to take your medicine with or without food



**BRING A LIST OF ALL YOUR MEDICINES** to every health visit

Information provided for educational purposes only. Please consult your health care provider about your specific health needs.

Go to [CardioSmart.org/Meds](https://www.CardioSmart.org/Meds) for more tips about how to keep track of your medicine.

[@CardioSmart](#) [Facebook](#)

If you would like to download or order additional patient or provider topics, visit [CardioSmart.org/Topics](https://www.CardioSmart.org/Topics).

# Remember!

It is important to take your medications regularly and exactly as prescribed to get the full benefit.

# COPD TRIGGERS

- Know and avoid triggers- triggers are things that can worsen your COPD.
- Common triggers include scents, cold air and/or hot humid air, air quality, wind, smoke, chemicals, emotions, respiratory infections
- As you learn what things worsen your COPD, you can learn to avoid them

## COMMON COPD TRIGGERS



AIR POLLUTION  
& SMOG



CIGARETTE SMOKE



DUST



EXTREME COLD



HOT & HUMID  
WEATHER



SCENTED  
PRODUCTS

# COPD FLARE-UPS

- A COPD flare-up occurs when your COPD symptoms get worse
- Flare-ups are usually caused by COPD triggers
- This is the main reason people with COPD go to the hospital
- Flare-ups should not be ignored

# HOW TO HANDLE COPD FLARE-UPS

- Stay healthy
- Recognize COPD flare-up symptoms
- Start treating a COPD flare-up quickly
- Learn when to call your doctor or go to the ER





EXERCISE

HEALTHY FOOD

SLEEP

# STAY HEALTHY



- 1 Try to avoid catching the flu, colds, and other infectious diseases
- 2 Get vaccinated
- 3 Ensure you get proper amount of sleep, nutrition, and exercise
- 4 Stay away from sick people
- 5 Maintain good hand hygiene
- 6 Follow your COPD Action Plan – if you don't have one, ask your doctor about getting one



more  
out of breath



more out  
of breath  
despite taking  
my reliever  
medicines



more phlegm,  
change in  
colour: dark  
yellow, green



more chesty  
coughing



## RECOGNIZE COPD FLARE-UP SYMPTOMS

- Feeling more tired than usual
- Increased shortness of breath
- More coughing than usual
- Your mucus changes colour– may be green, yellow, brown or rust-coloured
- You have more mucus than usual or it becomes thicker and/or stickier
- Fever, sore throat or cold symptoms
- Need to sit up or sit in chair to sleep
- Feeling unwell





My COPD Action Plan \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Patient's Copy (Patient's Name)

This is to tell me how I will take care of myself when I have a COPD flare-up.

My goals are \_\_\_\_\_

My support contacts are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name & Phone Number) (Name & Phone Number)

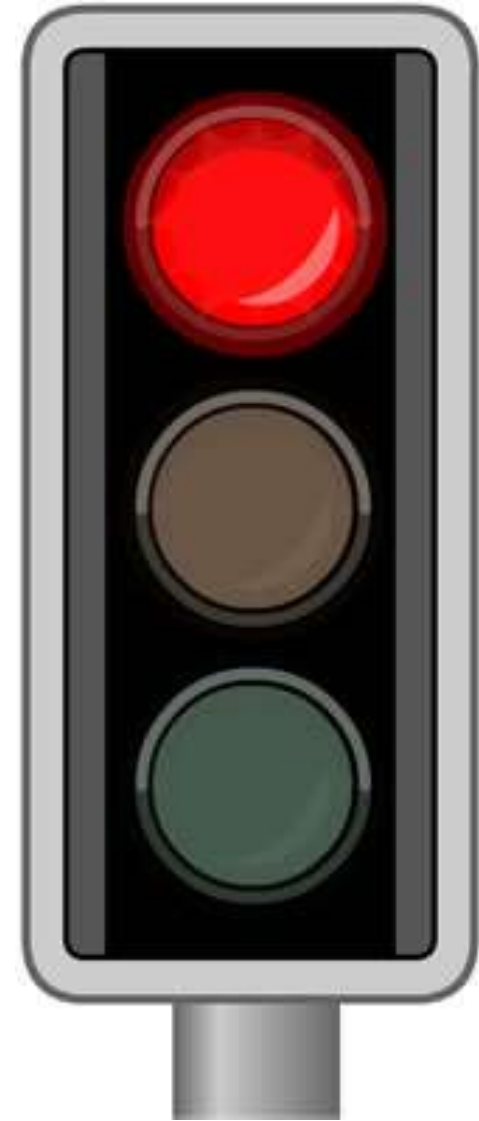
COPD  
FLARE-UP:  
START  
TREATMENT  
EARLY

My Symptoms	I Feel Well 	I Feel Worse 	I Feel Much Worse <b>URGENT</b>
I have sputum.	My usual sputum colour is: _____	Changes in my sputum, for at least 2 days. Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	My symptoms are not better after taking my flare-up medicine for 48 hours.
I feel short of breath.	When I do this: _____	More short of breath than usual for at least 2 days. Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	I am very short of breath, nervous, confused and/or drowsy, and/or I have chest pain. 
My Actions	Stay Well	Take Action	Call For Help
	I use my daily puffers as directed.	If I checked 'Yes' to one or both of the above, I use my <b>prescriptions</b> for COPD flare-ups.	I will call my support contact and/or see my doctor and/or go to the nearest emergency department.
	If I am on oxygen, I use _____ L/min.	I use my daily puffers as usual. If I am more short of breath than usual, I will take ___ puffs of _____ up to a maximum of ___ times per day.	I will dial 911. 
Notes:		I use my breathing and relaxation methods as taught to me. I pace myself to save energy.	<b>Important information:</b> I will tell my doctor, respiratory educator, or case manager <b>within 2 days</b> if I had to use any of my flare-up prescriptions. I will also make follow-up appointments to review my COPD Action Plan twice a year.
		If I am on oxygen, I will increase it from ___ L/min to ___ L/min.	

# WHEN TO CALL 911

Call 911 immediately if you have the following symptoms:

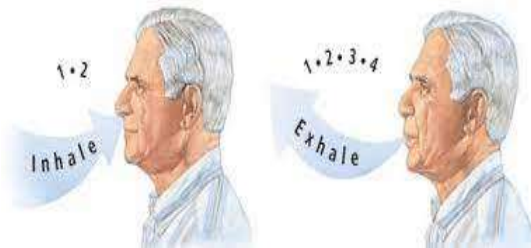
- You have chest pain or trouble breathing
- Your lips or fingers are blue
- You feel drowsy, confused or agitated



# SHORTNESS OF BREATH

- One of the most common symptoms for people living with COPD is shortness of breath or the feeling of breathlessness
- Breathlessness can occur when you exercise or engage in activity. Some people feel breathless most of the time
- Breathlessness can cause feelings of anxiety but there are things you can do to make it easier
  - Some people use a fan in front of their face to relieve this feeling
  - Breathing techniques
  - Positioning to reduce breathlessness

# BREATHING TECHNIQUES



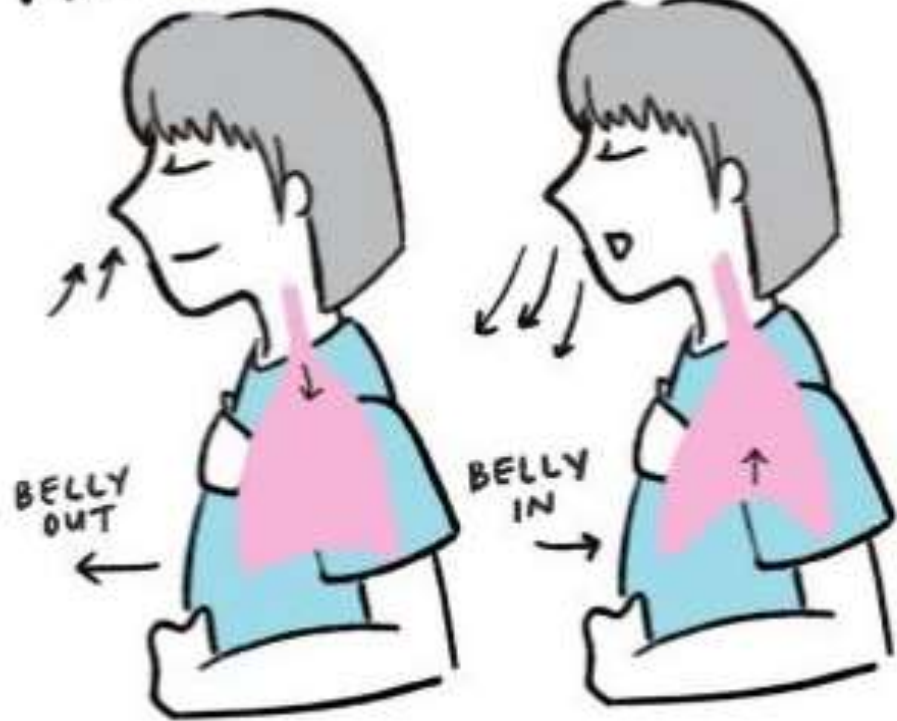
## Pursed-lip breathing

- 1) Keeping your mouth closed, breathe in slowly through your nose
- 2) Purse your mouth like you're blowing out candles or whistling
- 3) Keeping your lips pursed, breathe out slowly making sure this phase is longer than you did to breathe in



**INHALE**

**EXHALE**



# BREATHING TECHNIQUES

Diaphragmatic breathing or belly breathing:

- 1) Sit comfortably in a chair with relaxed shoulders
- 2) Place your hands on your stomach
- 3) Breathe in slowly through your nose allowing your stomach to rise under your hands
- 4) Breathe out slowly through pursed lips, feeling your stomach fall back to its normal position
- 5) Wait after each exhalation until you are ready to take another deep breath

# POSITIONING TO REDUCE BREATHLESSNESS



## Sitting

Sit comfortably in a chair and place both feet on the ground

Lean your head and shoulders forward slightly

With your arms relaxed, rest your arms on your knees



# POSITIONING TO REDUCE BREATHLESSNESS

## Standing

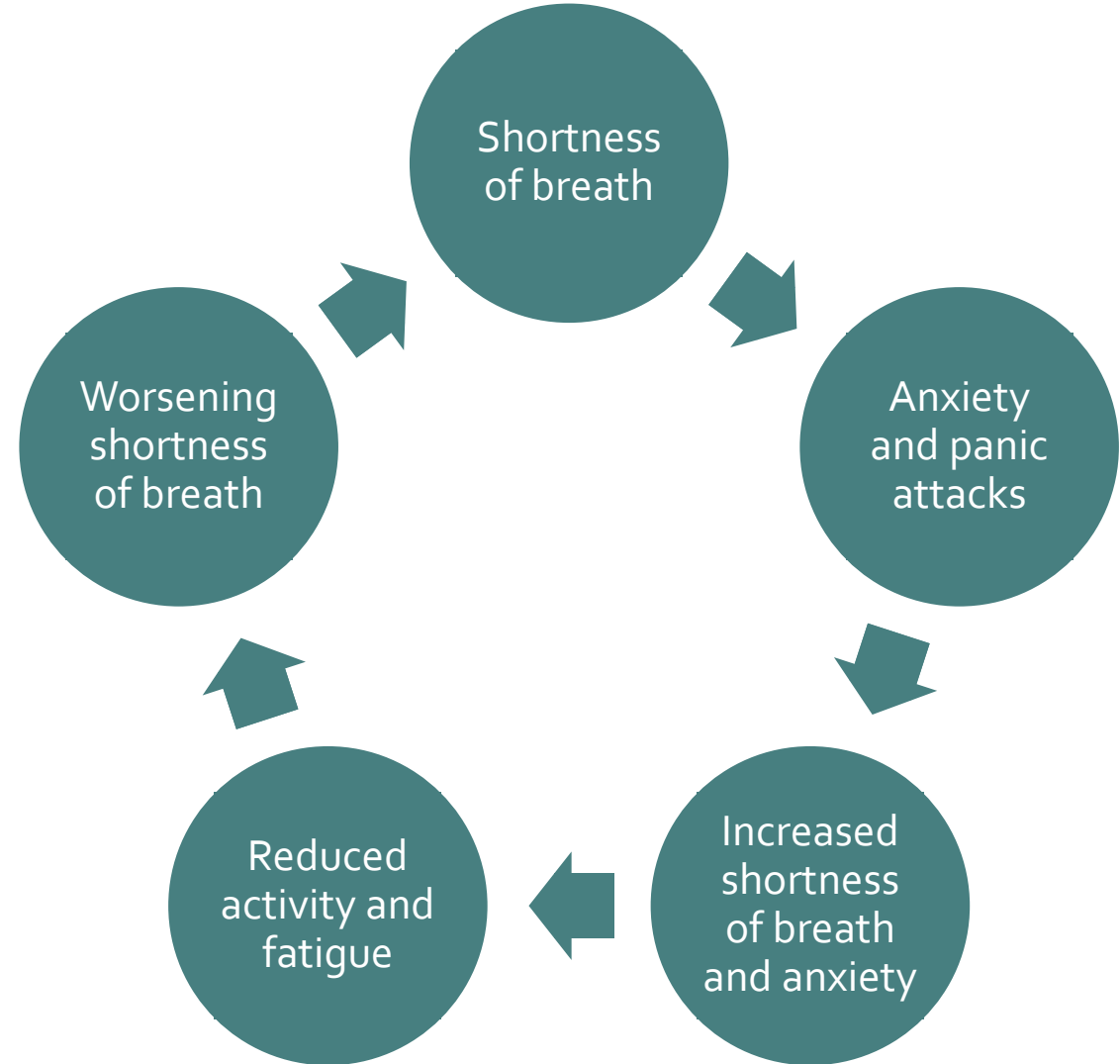
- 1) Lean your back against a wall, chair or counter (make sure it's stable)
- 2) Move your feet so they are slightly apart
- 3) Lean your head and shoulders forward slightly while staying relaxed
- 4) Rest your hands on your thighs or a piece of furniture



# ENERGY CONSERVATION

Prioritize	Prioritize your activities
Plan	Plan your schedule ahead, make sure it's within your limits
Pace	Pace yourself
Position	Position your body and environment to decrease breathlessness
Use	Use pursed-lip breathing when exerting yourself
Try	Try to maintain a positive attitude

# COPD AND ANXIETY THE ANXIETY- BREATHLESSNESS CYCLE





## Coping with Anxiety

VISUALIZE

# DEEP BREATHING

- Pursed lip breathing
- Belly breathing

# COPING WITH ANXIETY

Stressful emotions may cause you to feel short of breath

While this may feel uncomfortable, there are ways to cope with anxiety caused by difficult emotions:

- Try to plan ahead and avoid situations that may cause stress
- If you are unable to avoid these situations, make plans to reduce stress as much as possible
- If you do become anxious and short of breath, find a comfortable place to sit and begin pursed lip breathing
- Speak with your support system about situations that cause stress. This will provide them with the knowledge needed to support you
- Consider mental health counselling for anxiety



# COPD AND EXERCISE

- Exercise is one of the most important things you can do to manage your COPD
- While it may seem easier to take it easy, this can worsen your breathing in the long-term
- Exercise can help improve your energy level and help you breathe better



# BENEFITS OF EXERCISE

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When you are less physically active, your muscles, including your heart, become less efficient.

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Your muscles work harder causing you to feel more breathless and tired

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Exercising regularly can strengthen your muscles and help your heart and lungs work more efficiently

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As a result, you'll be able to do more with the same amount of effort

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Exercise also helps to maintain a healthy weight, helps your body fight off infections, improve your energy level and mood



# COPD AND EXERCISE

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Exercise does not have to be complicated

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Starting slow and pacing your activity is important

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As you get stronger, you can do a bit more or exercise a little longer

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Walking is a good and simple way to improve your fitness

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Speak with your primary healthcare provider before starting an exercise program to make sure it is appropriate for you. You can also discuss when to use your inhalers

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You can also speak with your doctor about pulmonary rehab to see if it's appropriate for you

# WHAT IS CHRONIC DISEASE?

COPD is known as a chronic disease

This means that COPD is a long-term condition that will worsen over time

COPD is not curable, but there are ways to slow this progression

There can be periods of wellness and periods of illness with severe symptoms

# WHAT IS ADVANCE CARE PLANNING?

A time for you to think about what is important to you if you were sick or injured and could not speak for yourself

It is important to choose a **Substitute Decision Maker** - the person who can speak for you if you are unable to speak for yourself - let him or her know your wishes and the type of care you want and do not want.

***Why is this so important?*** It can be difficult for others to make decisions for you if they don't know your wishes or your values

# WHEN SHOULD I TALK ABOUT ADVANCE CARE PLANNING?

- Everyone should do advance care planning as soon as possible. Especially when you are healthy and able to have these conversations.
- You can talk about your wishes at any point. After a hospital visit or a flare-up of your chronic condition may be a perfect time.
- You can write down your wishes or make an audio or video recording and can change it at any time.

# ADVANCE CARE PLANNING

- Find out more:

- Speak with your healthcare provider or one of our community partners who specialize in advance care planning.
- Visit [www.advancecareplanning.ca](http://www.advancecareplanning.ca)

## Talk to Your Health Care Provider about **Advance Care Planning**

**What would happen if you were sick or injured and could not tell doctors what kind of care you wanted?**

**Who would speak for you and make decisions for you?**





**Thanks for  
Listening!**

**Please email  
questions about  
this webinar to:  
[info@nfht.ca](mailto:info@nfht.ca)**

## COPD Resources

Resource	Website	Phone	Email
The Canadian Lung Association	<a href="http://www.lung.ca/copd">www.lung.ca/copd</a>	1-888-566-5864	<a href="mailto:info@lung.ca">info@lung.ca</a>
Living Well with COPD	<a href="http://www.livingwellwithcopd.com">www.livingwellwithcopd.com</a>		

## Smoking Cessation Resources

Resource	Website	Phone	Email
NFHT Smoking Cessation program (only available to NFHT patients)	<a href="http://www.nfht.ca">www.nfht.ca</a>	289-252-2130	<a href="mailto:info@nfht.ca">info@nfht.ca</a>
STOP on the NET	<a href="http://www.nicotinedependenceclinic.com/en/stop/stop-on-the-net">www.nicotinedependenceclinic.com/en/stop/stop-on-the-net</a>	1-800-463-2338 ext 34455	<a href="mailto:stop.study@camh.ca">stop.study@camh.ca</a>



## Advance Care Planning Resources

Resource	Website	Phone	Email
Ed's House Northumberland Hospice Care Centre	<a href="https://edshouse.northumberlandhospice.ca/education-awareness/">https://edshouse.northumberlandhospice.ca/education-awareness/</a>	1-855-473-8875	<a href="mailto:hospiceservices@commcare.ca">hospiceservices@commcare.ca</a>
Advance Care Planning Canada	<a href="http://www.advancecareplanning.ca">www.advancecareplanning.ca</a>		
Speak Up Ontario	<a href="https://www.speakupontario.ca/resources-for-individuals-and-families/">https://www.speakupontario.ca/resources-for-individuals-and-families/</a>	1-800-349-3111 ext 231	
Hospice Palliative Care Ontario	<a href="https://www.hpco.ca/advancecareplanning/">https://www.hpco.ca/advancecareplanning/</a>	1-800-349-3111	<a href="mailto:info@hpco.ca">info@hpco.ca</a>

## Mental Health Resources

Resource	Website	Phone	Email
NHH Community Mental Health Walk In Counselling (ages 7 and up, available Tues 8am-4pm and Thurs 10am-6pm at 1011 Elgin St. W., Suite 200, Cobourg)	<a href="https://nhh.ca/walk-in-counselling">https://nhh.ca/walk-in-counselling</a>	905-377-9891 for general inquiries or 905-377-7784 to receive support from walk in counselling	
Bounceback (Ages 15 and up, free, guided, self-help program for mild-moderate anxiety or depression)	<a href="https://bouncebackontario.ca/">https://bouncebackontario.ca/</a>	Referral from primary care provider or self-refer through Ontario Shores: 1-877-767-9642	bb-referral@cmha-yr.on.ca
4-County Crisis (24 hr free, confidential crisis support)	<a href="https://cmhahkpr.ca/programs-services/four-county-crisis/">https://cmhahkpr.ca/programs-services/four-county-crisis/</a>	1-866-995-9933	

## References

Canadian Lung Association. (2019). *Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)*. Retrieved from [www.lung.ca/copd](http://www.lung.ca/copd)

Living Well with COPD. (2016). *Living well with COPD: A plan of action for life*. Retrieved from [https://www.livingwellwithcopd.com/DATA/DOCUMENT/65\\_en~v~summary-guide.pdf](https://www.livingwellwithcopd.com/DATA/DOCUMENT/65_en~v~summary-guide.pdf)