

Pulmonary Rehabilitation in COPD

What is pulmonary rehabilitation?

Pulmonary rehabilitation is a program for patients with lung diseases, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). It helps you breathe and makes it easier for you to do normal activities. The program includes exercise, social support, and tools to help you cope with the disease.

Who can it help?

The program can help people who have already tried medicine for COPD but still have trouble breathing or doing day-to-day activities.

Will it help me live longer?

Yes, people who try pulmonary rehabilitation have a better chance of living longer. They also have a better quality of life and less anxiety.

Do I have to stay in the hospital?

Although most of these programs are based out of hospitals, you will only have to come during the day. You will not have to stay overnight.

How long does it take?

You will probably have to go to the hospital for two to three hours a day, three days a week. Most programs last between six and 12 weeks.

What kinds of exercise will I do?

Most pulmonary rehabilitation programs involve upper- and lower-body exercises. Lower-body training might include walking or riding a stationary bicycle. These exercises will make it easier for you to do things like climbing stairs. Upper-body training targets your arms and shoulders. It will help you do things like carrying groceries and cooking dinner.

Where can I get more information?

Your doctor

American Academy of Family Physicians' Consumer Education Resource
Web site: <http://familydoctor.org/706.xml>

American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation
Web site: <http://www.aacvpr.org/Resources/ResourcesForPatients/tabid/109/Default.aspx>

American College of Chest Physicians
Web site: <http://www.chestnet.org/accp/patient-guides/pulmonary-rehabilitation-team-approach-improving-quality-life>

American Lung Association
Web site: <http://www.lungusa.org/>

American Thoracic Society
Web site: <http://patients.thoracic.org>

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This handout is provided to you by your family doctor and the American Academy of Family Physicians. Other health-related information is available from the AAFP online at <http://familydoctor.org>.

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