



# EXERCISING

WITH

## CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE

*While chronic obstructive pulmonary disease can make exercise more challenging, regular physical activity may actually improve your symptoms and make it easier to perform everyday tasks. In addition to reducing your risk of developing many other diseases, appropriate exercise can help you maintain a healthy body weight, reduce anxiety and stress, sleep better and feel more energized. The key is to determine what type of exercise is best for you and to follow a program that accommodates your individual needs and concerns.*

### Getting Started

- Talk with your health care provider before starting an exercise program and ask for specific programming recommendations.
- Take all medications as recommended by your physician.
- The goals of your program should be to increase your cardiovascular fitness, become less sensitive to dyspnea, develop more efficient breathing patterns, and improve your ability to perform activities of daily living.
- Choose activities that you enjoy such as walking, cycling, and swimming. Mind-body activities that emphasize energy centering and balance, such as tai chi and yoga, also are recommended.
- Start slowly and gradually increase the intensity and duration of your workouts. You may need to start with five- to 10-minute intervals or sessions. As your fitness improves, extend the length of the interval and/or shorten the rest period between intervals. Build up to 30-minute sessions, three or more days per week.
- Use the Ratings of Perceived Exertion scale rather than heart rate to measure your intensity, and adjust your workouts according to fluctuations in your symptoms.

### Exercise Cautions

- Breathing efficiency can be improved by performing pursed lips and diaphragm breathing, both of which will slow the respiratory rate. If necessary, use oxygen therapy during exercise to prevent exercise-induced hypoxemia
- Avoid extreme weather conditions and schedule your exercise sessions during mid- to late-morning hours.

Your exercise program should be designed to maximize the benefits with the fewest risks of aggravating your health or physical condition. Consider contacting a certified health and fitness professional\* who can work with you and your health care provider to establish realistic goals and design a safe and effective program that addresses your specific needs.

\*If your health care provider has not cleared you for independent physical activity and would like you to be monitored in a hospital setting or a medical fitness facility, you should exercise only under the supervision of a certified professional. The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) has two groups of certified fitness professionals that could meet your needs. The ACSM Certified Clinical Exercise Specialist (CES) is certified to support those with heart disease, diabetes and lung disease. The ACSM Registered Clinical Exercise Physiologist (RCEP) is qualified to support patients with a wide range of health challenges. You may locate all ACSM-certified fitness professionals by using the ProFinder at [www.acsm.org](http://www.acsm.org).

For more information, visit [www.exerciseismedicine.org](http://www.exerciseismedicine.org) or e-mail [eim@acsm.org](mailto:eim@acsm.org).

#### IN THE SERIES:

- > Cardiovascular Diseases
- > Pulmonary Diseases
- > Metabolic Diseases
- > Immunological/ Hematological Disorders
- > Orthopedic Diseases and Disabilities
- > Neuromuscular Disorders



Support for the Exercise is Medicine® Global Initiative is Provided By:

**EIM OFFICIAL PARTNERS:**

FOUNDING PARTNER FOUNDING PARTNER

**EIM ADVOCATES:**