

C.O.P.D.

Tips Guide

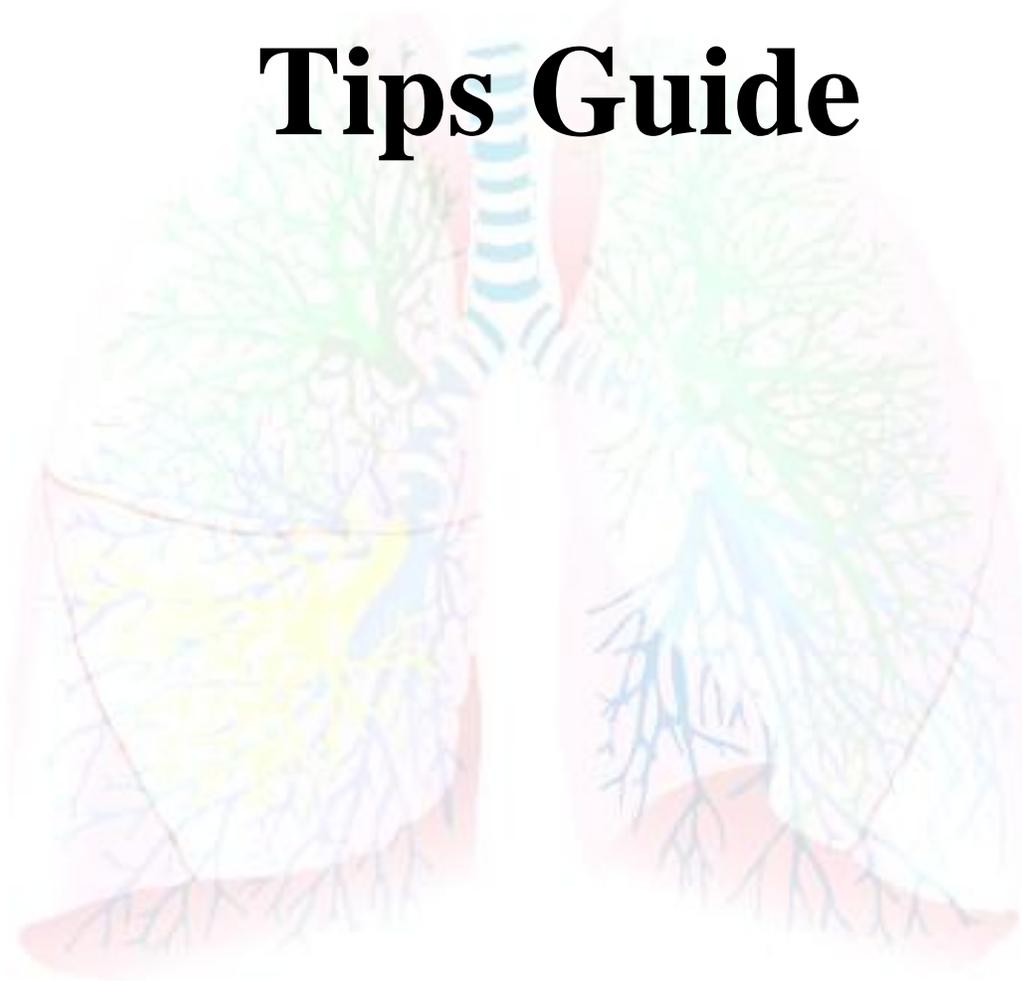
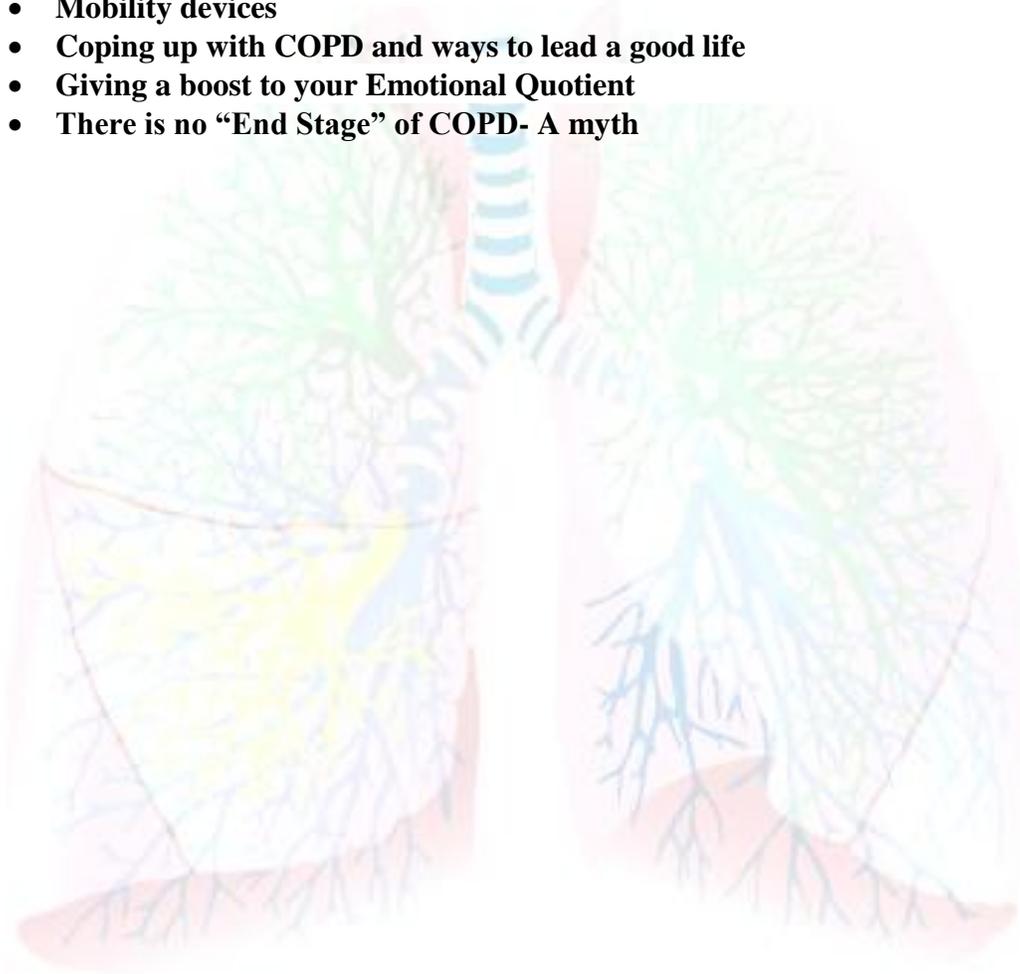


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Importance of family and friends to combat COPD

COPD or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease is a progressive health condition. If you are one diagnosed with it, then you would be the best person to talk about its difficulties. You might go through various emotional outbursts, like anger, guilt and fear. But being patient is important in this kind of condition and adopts a mature and clear perspective out of this. Being diagnosed with COPD is not the end because there is lot to look forward since the occurrence of this condition.

More than medications, therapies and such treatments, at this juncture of your life, it is rather very vital to have the support and care of all your friends and family. Therefore, it is rather and your utmost responsibility to let them know about such health conditions. Their encouraging word and support would be more effective than the modifications and other treatments. COPD causes lungs and breathing problems. It is during such conditions, you suffer from various health difficulties, such as, short of breath or breathlessness, chronic coughing, experiencing fatigue, sleeplessness and much more. Medications given for the treatment of these conditions also come along with its side effects, for example, affecting one's sleep. Therefore, all these require care, nourishment and complete attention from the part of your family and friends.

So, you must convey this health news and talk to your friends and family immediately, without any delay. Take the help of your doctor, who can brief them with your condition further on. This way they would be gaining a professional insight to it. Your doctor is the best person who can guide both you and your closed ones through this journey of yours. He or she will give you all the advice and necessary steps to combat your condition. This way, there would be awareness about this disease amongst all. The best time to let your family and friends know about your diagnosis with COPD is when you are at the beginning or first stage of the condition. This way they would be able to be with you and take care of you before, the condition takes or transforms in the mild or severe stage. In this journey, support of family and friends would provide a boost to your mental peace and you would be more than encouraged to cope up with your condition.

The reason to tell your loved ones is that they can assist you in times of emergency. They can be precautious and take measures of safety along with you. If your mom or wife knows about the things that you should or not, then you would not be left out on the nutritional requirements. Your friends would always be there to cheer you and assist you to de-stress, in fact your condition can lead your friends to adopt a healthy life style. You would be more like an example to them, to give up on negative habits, like smoking, if this was the cause for the development of COPD. So, letting the health news known to your close members is a must.

The goodness of oxygen therapy

COPD or Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease is airways' obstruction caused because of chronic bronchitis or emphysema. You can be diagnosed with COPD if you smoke cigarettes, where you start coughing and have difficulties in breathing. If it is on a severe note then you would be required to undergo medication, make use of oxygen treatment or even have a session of rehabilitation.

Oxygen treatment is one of the best ways to combat COPD and it is good because it aids in the increasing of oxygen's amount, flowing in your bloodstreams and lungs. Chronic COPD causes the reduction of oxygen level in your blood, so increasing the amount of oxygen would provide you better breathing and also increase your longevity.

Through oxygen therapy, oxygen is delivered via:

- Cylinders
- Concentrators
- Devices of liquid oxygen

You can get oxygen therapy done anywhere, any place and daily, whether the hospital or even in your house because the systems related to this are portable in nature.

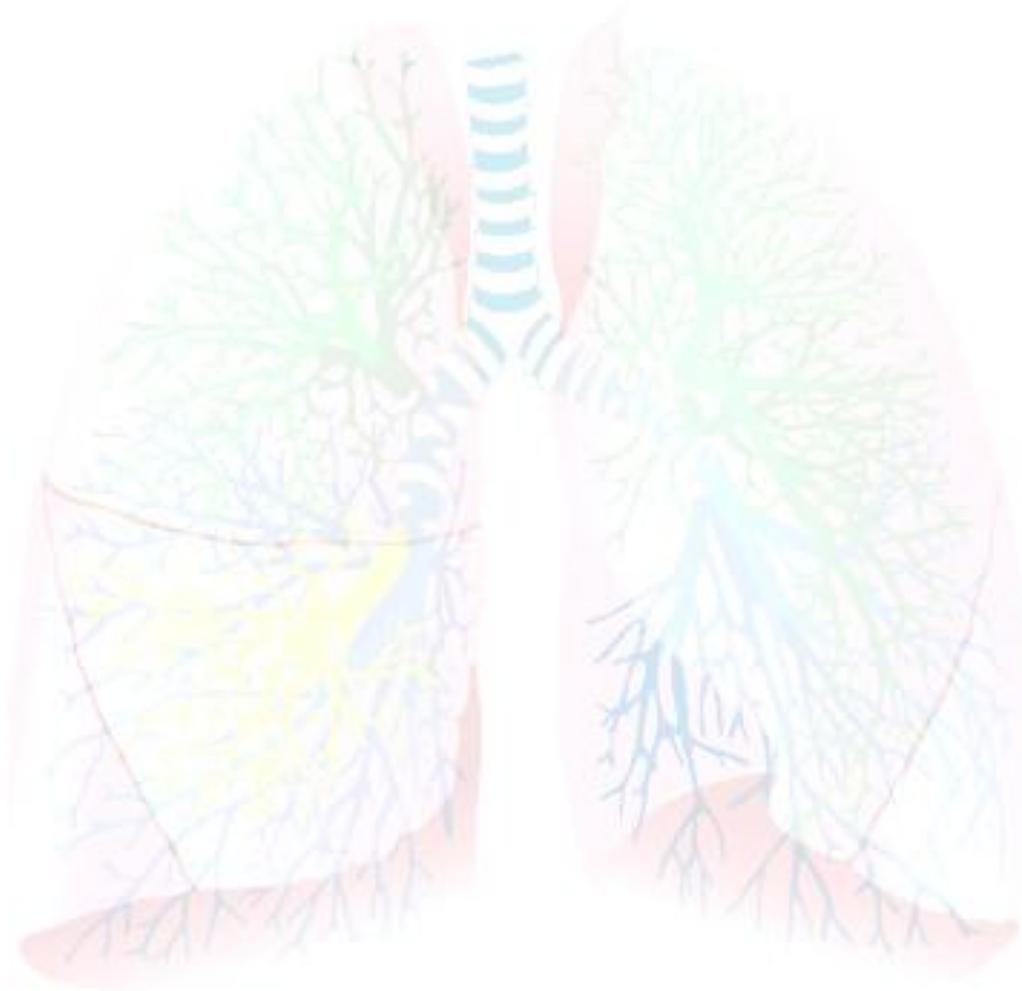
If you receive oxygen therapy on a long term basis then your life and its quality would increase more than ever. You would live much longer in spite of coping up with COPD and also increase the level of oxygen within you. Through the therapy, you can experience changes like increased level of energy and also less breathing problems.

When you are diagnosed with COPD, your oxygen level, especially in the bloodstream becomes lower than ever. So, oxygen therapy is meted out to increase the level and also to either slow down or prevent heart diseases. When experiencing shortness of breath in a rapid and increased form, also known as exacerbation, oxygen is given. At home, you can make use of this therapy, while experiencing lowering of oxygen in your blood and that too for a prolonged duration. If the therapy is on long term basis then use it for maximum 18 hours per day without any kind of interruptions. If used on a regular basis then there would lower risks of experiencing death because of low level of oxygen. You can take it for 24 hours or more if you want additional benefits out of it. But prior to getting this therapy done, it is better to get a test done which is of arterial blood gas.

Studies and researches have proved, oxygen use at home for at least 15 hours or more, aids in increasing the life quality of an individual, especially, one's who suffer from severe COPD. Once you start getting this therapy done, you would witness an improvement in various problems, like memory, confusions etc. You would also improve the functioning of kidneys.

Basically there are no problems and risks involved in oxygen therapy if you follow all the instructions and guidelines provided by your doctor. But remember one thing that oxygen

is susceptible to hazards related to fire. So, take care of safety measures, avoid using it around objects that are flammable, having flames etc. And most important of all, if you are using this therapy, you have to give up smoking.



Importance of exercise if suffering from COPD

A healthy body is a way to have a healthy mind, and exercise is a part of achieving an active mind and body. For this, rehabilitation to combat chronic diseases, exercise and work out regimes are followed. For lung disease, as severe as, COPD where breathing shortness because of exercises is a myth, it is one of the most important activities to combat it. Doing regular exercises in fact aids in relieving short breathlessness. Your muscles and also heart is improved because of doing regular exercises.

Importance of exercises is felt by all COPD patients because it helps in increasing:

1. Strength and endurance of your muscle
2. Level of energy
3. Endurance of heart-lung or cardiopulmonary
4. Immunity level to combat infections
5. Relaxation
6. Sound sleep
7. Density of your bone

Apart from increasing the above, exercises also helps in decreasing the following:

1. Factors causing the risk of heart diseases
2. Breath shortness
3. Blood pressure
4. Medicine's side effects
5. Level of blood sugar
6. Depression

Prior to starting off with your exercising routine, consult your doctor and take his or her advice on the right method for exercising. He or she would assist you in the development of a proper exercising program, as per your bodily requirements and stamina. You might also have to undergo a program related to pulmonary rehabilitation. This program aids in the restoration of your health and also increases your life quality, with the elements of nutrition, exercises and education.

The program is inclusive of stretching for the increase of flexibility, endurance and strength of your muscles and also for the sustenance of an active life. Prior to doing exercises, stretching is done as a warm up exercise for your muscles. This is important because then you would be able to develop the required strength to handle all regular tasks and activities.

Exercise programs are very much essential for all COPD patients and the intensity in it is the most vital of all. Training comprising high intensity is good for the functioning of your peripheral muscles and also adaptation to ventilation. You can try cycling and walking, as a part of your regular exercises.

In my opinion, setting a goal prior to your exercising regime is a must and then you should work towards achieving that set goal. It is important that you write them and keep them in your mind. This way you would be able to win and achieve accomplishment.

Since, you are diagnosed with COPD, oxygen is vital and so is its need while you are exercising. So, have a discussion regarding oxygen therapy prior to doing exercises. Avoid exercising if you feel shortness of breath, discomfort, pressure, burning, and heaviness felt in your chest. Pain experienced in your neck, jaw, arms, back or shoulders unusually. But if you feel that your heart is racing, experiencing palpitation, feeling dizzy, tired or having joint pains then stop doing exercises. Always take the advice of your physician and doctor before you start of with your exercising regime, so that you can yield the greatest benefits out of it.



Importance of COPD forums

As we all know that COPD or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease is a condition that occurs in progression and individuals suffering from it find it difficult to breath. Not only this many patients had to put a halt to various enjoyable activities because of such breathing problems related to it. Many of us also get agitated, depressed and also under anxiety. Medications and treatments are a part of its recovering process but more than this support and care is required. One way to acquire this support is via various COPD forums. You can use many such online forums to let out your feelings, depressions, your highs and also lows and much more. These forums are the best place to learn, understand and also meet individuals who would care for you truly. These COPD forums welcome all, both the caregivers and the patients.

The forums are there to provide you with every aspect related to COPD conditions. You can listen and read about other's problems too and how their health is affected by this disease. Right and correct information can make a person's health progress. Through the COPD forums, you can come to know and talk about various topics related to this condition. Exploration of current COPD issues, its affects, results etc all these are talked about in the forums. Your doctor is there to provide you with all the information but if you care about your health more than anyone then following these forums would help you further. You would get a deeper knowledge and know some simple ways to prevent it. Dealing with normal side effects of COPD, like stress and to get rid of it, is all discussed in these forums.

Some of the best COPD forums are frequented and participated by world best medical experts and practitioners. Through them you can avail all the necessary and also extra information related to this health condition. Practical and effective tools regarding COPD and more are available in these forums. You can apply these and make all the necessary changes in your health. It is said that knowing about experiences and learning about the progressive results, assists individuals suffering from similar conditions to cope with it further. So, through these forums you will come across various members who talk about their life experiences. Through them you would be gaining encouragement and the will power to fight COPD condition.

COPD forums also shares some light moments and fun write ups too, like health related jokes and other fun elements. These are positive factors that help you to cope up with the condition further. Any kind of doubts and queries can all be answered and whose answers can be found through these forums. You would be your independent self through these forums and these are the best avenues via which you come to know fellow patients, doctors and experts. You can also make friends with them and have a healthy life in future. Therefore, COPD forums are the best place to be and participate in.

Vitality of doctor's orders and advices

Any health conditions or diseases, if not taken care or given proper treatments, would become aggravated and severe in nature. Suffering from COPD or having its development might not be deciphered, as symptoms are not visible till its complete development. Therefore, you must consult your doctor and take his or her recommendation regarding various tests, so that you are able to know about it. One such test is spirometry, which is a breathing test. This is recommended by doctors, if you are a smoker or were one or if you have lung irritants for a prolonged duration. Through this test your doctor would be able to measure and determine the functioning of your lungs. The other name for this test is called Lung Function or Pulmonary Function tests.

Taking doctor's advice and recommendation would enable you to get a good knowledge about COPD. COPD occurs in individuals who are 40 years of age and above, especially if he or she has a smoking history. But then there are many who haven't treaded to this path of smoking. If you are or were a smoker or if you have been exposed to various air pollutants, for example, being a passive smoker then the risk of developing COPD is higher in you.

Your doctor would help you in providing you with the symptoms and signs of this conditions. If you cough and have a chronic form of it without any wheezing, sputum, chest tightness or having breathlessness in an increased rate then it is time you should consult a doctor.

Your doctor would advise you to undergo the spirometry test, if he or she sees any kind of COPD signs. Through this test he or she would be able to detect the condition, prior to even symptom formation. You have to blow on a hose out of your lungs, which is attached to the spirometer. This piece of machinery is sensitive enough to take the measurement and also detect the condition, even before you start developing the symptoms.

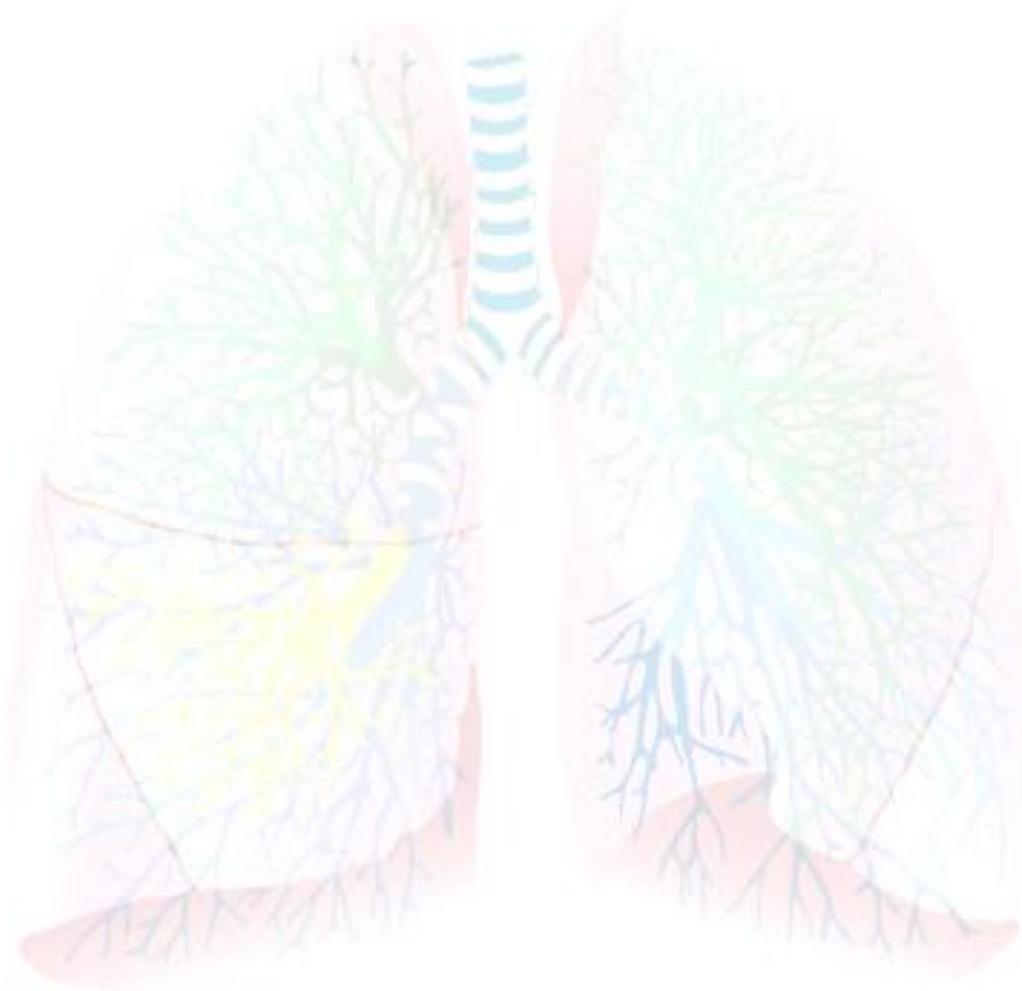
Your doctor would then be able to know the severity of your condition and decipher the stages, you are in, which are in four forms:

- At risk
- Mild
- Moderate
- Severe

Why is a doctor's orders and advice important? The answer is very simple. If you do not follow your doctor's order and take his treatments then the condition would be misdiagnosed. This way there would be an aggravation of worsening of your condition, which would be increased if left untreated, without any therapy or medications. Once your doctor diagnoses you, he or she would be enabled to provide you with a treatment

and medication's plan, thereby, aiding in controlling all the symptoms and preventing the progression of the disease.

So, always be open to your doctor because he or she is the only best person to provide you with all the important details, information and treatment plans. He or she would be your guide towards the road to recovery.



Alternative ways and elements in treating COPD

COPD patients are on the rise, with 11% present in every population. You can use traditional methods of treatment like inhalers and other forms of medications. Though these don't cure this condition and many are there who are not responsive to this form of treatment. You can avail other alternative treatments if these traditional ones don't help you with this condition. Consult your doctor to provide you with supplements that would aid in the loosening of mucus caused by COPD. These are inclusive of alpha-lipoic acid, coenzyme, NADH, acetyl-L-carnitine, taurine, potassium and magnesium. You have to get your vitamin A and its status monitored along with the intake of these supplements. Intake of Vitamin A is correlated to COPD and its severity.

There are many alternative treatments and ways to treat COPD and one of them is via herbal methods. Herbal treatment is the best and safest alternative COPD treatment. It can both prevent and also treat COPD. Some also aid with the symptoms. The use of yarrow is done for complaints in the upper part of our respiratory system.

Herbs have many elements for treating COPD:

- They contain antioxidants, which aids in the reduction of molecules that causes inflammation adding on to breathing problems
- They contain antifungal elements, which does mold inhibition
- They help in the modulation of immunity for decreasing allergens
- Contains anti-inflammatory elements and protecting lungs
- It is free from the contamination of metal and does not build toxic

Funtumia elastica is a rubber tree found in Africa and the usage of its bark reduces complaints related to respiration. It contains, antifungal, antioxidants, antibiotics and properties of anti-inflammation. There is absence of toxicity and is not banned by equine governing institution. It has other compounds like:

Anthocyanins, is a pigment and filled with antioxidants. It aids in the reduction of inflammation and also prevention of asthma development.

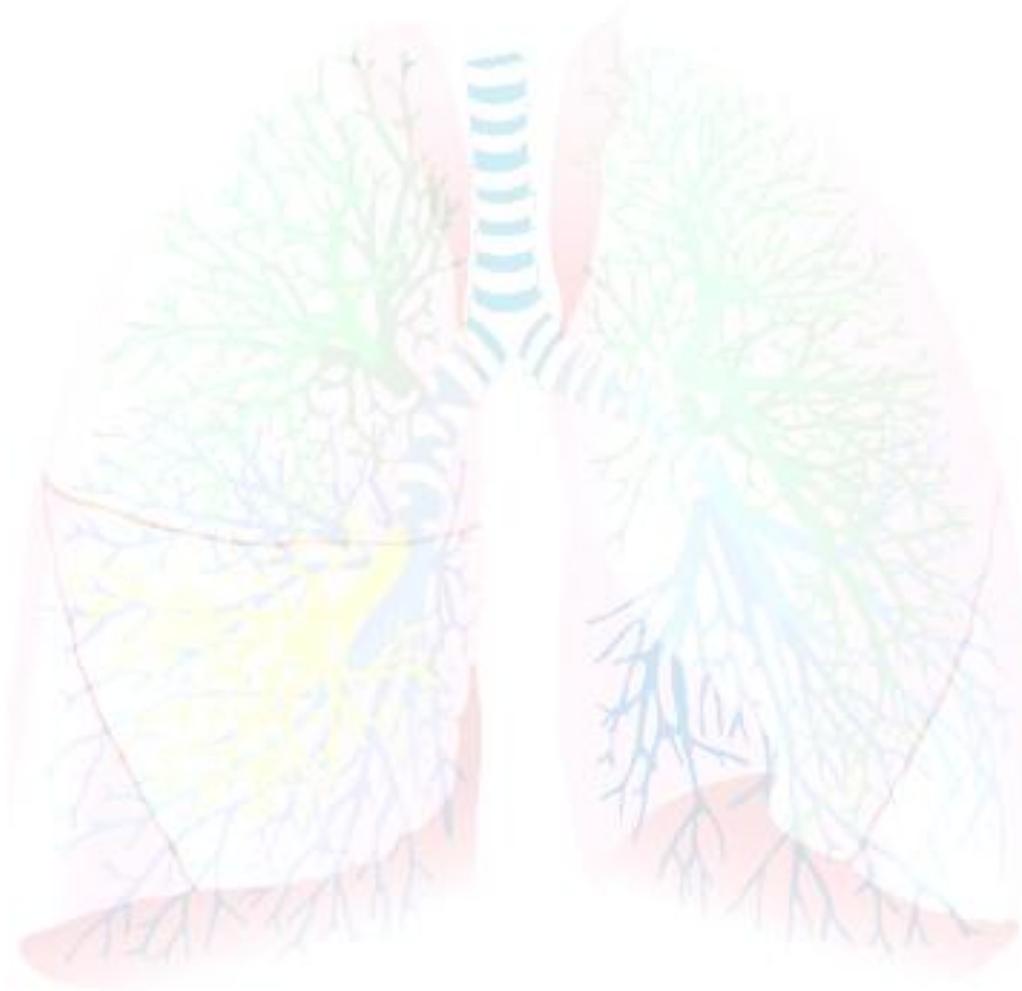
Plant sterols have properties of anti-cancer and anti-inflammatory

Flavonoids contain Vitamin C. It prevents and does the treatment of COPD, lung diseases and asthma.

The other alternative ways are through prevention and precautions. Lessen all dust and lower the presence of all allergens around you and your environment. Try to keep your surrounding always clean and the best way to avoid such dusts is by avoiding cigarette smoking. This is the worse form of dust and allergen causing factor.

Do deep breathing and adopt the ways that yoga provides. Yoga is the ancient and the most effective form of exercise that helps in the reduction of all kinds of diseases and

ailments. Therefore, yoga and its various postures would aid in the regulation of your breathing and also control it. This is the most conventional and alternative mode of COPD treatment. Try to breathe easy and breathe fresh. Walk in smoke free and non-polluting areas. Be amongst the nature, as much as, you can. This way you would be gaining natural oxygen and also the purest form to breathe. Follow these and witness success in your health.



Mobility devices

COPD or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease affects our mobility and other activities, thus changing our lifestyle to a large extent. But then this should not stop us from achieving and or leading an active life. There are many who cannot move, especially, the elderly patients of COPD. For patients like these, there are devices of mobility, like scooters, wheelchairs etc that enables them to move around. There are seat enabled walkers. You can take it wherever you want to go and if you are tired or having loss of breath because of walking, you can put on the brakes in this walker and sit on it. These walkers, wheelchairs, scooter etc can be stored in your car's trunk, since they don't weigh much and they can be availed anytime.

If you are diagnosed with COPD you have to be active and try to maintain it as much as possible. This is because of making your muscles stronger, so that less of oxygen is used up. So, these COPD mobility devices help patients maintain their mobility and lead an active life.

Wheelchairs, especially the motorized ones are best for such conditions, since there is an impairment of one's ability in working a manual form of a wheelchair. If you have oxygen, then you would require one with a unit for carrying your oxygen device. In such cases, where you have to use a wheelchair, choose liquid oxygen that is portable and available in light carrying devices. Consult medical supplying companies for various devices, even your oxygen supplier.

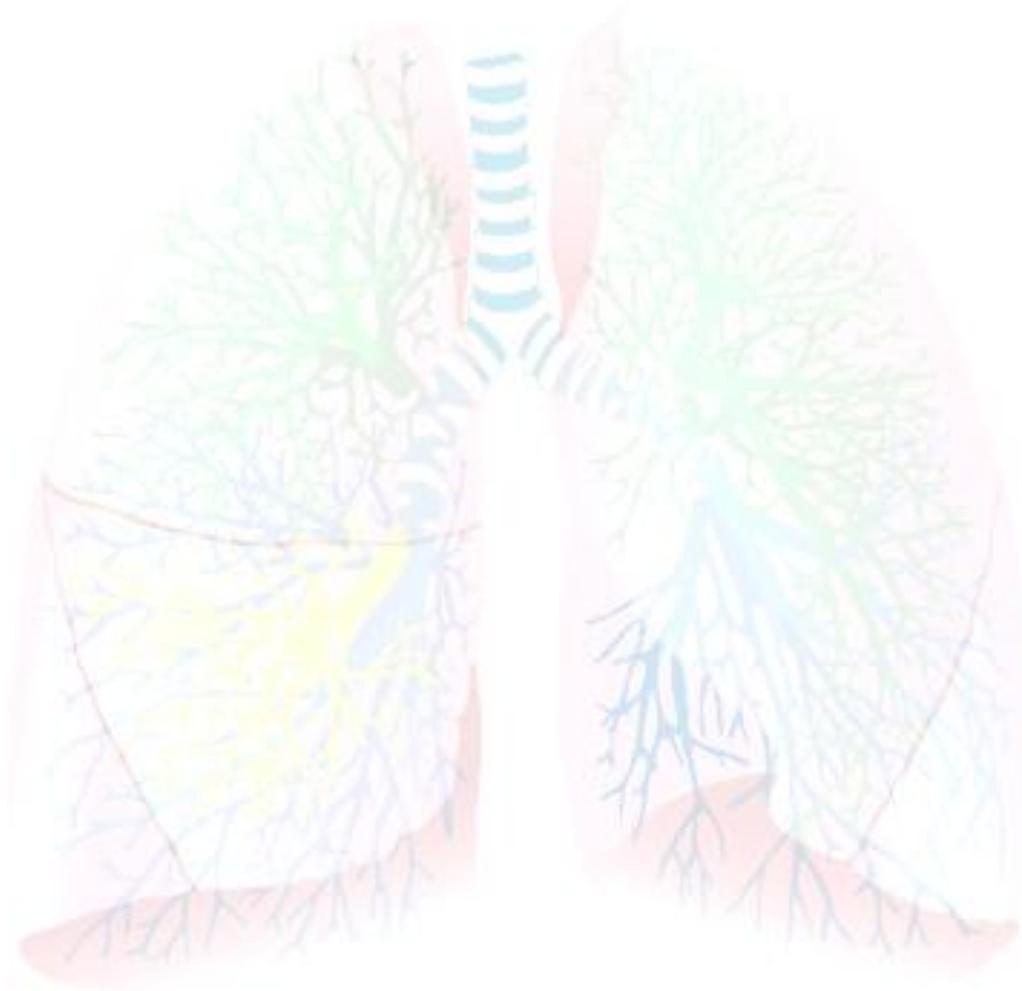
Most of the devices are available today with various features and wide range of options. So, prior to your purchase, do some research and studies. If you want to make short trips then use a walker, whereas, for long trips, use a wheelchair. Scooters cannot be used indoors unlike the others.

Insurance covers less of wheelchairs and walkers that possess more of whistles and bells. In most cases, you might have to pay from your pocket only. Insurance covers part of these kind COPD mobility devices and that to after acquiring a prescription from your physician.

But then one must not take these mobility devices, while going through the condition of COPD as an excuse. In fact you have to be more active than ever and follow a healthy lifestyle. Just giving up and making use of a wheelchair, scooter or a walker wouldn't help, instead aggravate the condition more. During this time you have to be strong willed more than ever.

Walking a lot is a part of exercise, therefore, COPD patients must walk to be fit and maintain their breathing too. Only if you lose on your breath that the mobility device can be used, otherwise just be free of it. This is vital more for the youngsters; it can be helpful for all elderly but if you are young and have energy then avoid using the mobility

devices. In fact, these are meant for all elders who are suffering from COPD condition in a chronic form.



Coping up with COPD and ways to lead a good life

Diagnosed with COPD can cause you a lot of frustration and lead to you to distress and depression. But you have to live on and to do so; you have to follow strategies and ways to improve your sleep, sexuality and mobility. It is not easy to live with it and it aggravates more because of the loss of breath you would experience. For this reason, at times you would require to put a halt to some activities which you enjoy. It is not only you in concern but COPD patient's friends and family also have to go through major changes, so as to assist you.

Being diagnosed with COPD can lead to various doubts and you begin ask yourself how long are you going to survive and if you don't take care then what are the consequences you would be facing. Share all your feelings, anxieties and fears with not only your doctor but also your friends and family. You can also become a member of some COPD support group. Believe me undergoing counseling would do a lot of good to you, especially if you are overwhelmed or experiencing depression.

As COPD patient, you would be facing many problems but you just cannot give up. All you need to do is follow various strategies that would help you to maintain your health and also increase your ability to cope with it. Try to learn more about this disease and condition. Approach it with the use of your commonsense and manage it with logic too. Refer to various programs of rehabilitation because here you can avail assessment, treatments and also accessibility to several support groups. Joining a rehabilitation program can help you to bring improvement in your abilities, lead daily activities in a much better way and also provide you with a good life.

Being diagnosed with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or COPD usually takes a person into a complete state of despair and shock, since the condition is incurable. But then this is not an end to everything. You can lead a happy and content life even being diagnosed with this condition. You have to sacrifice few things and lead a new and fresh lifestyle all together.

First and foremost, quit smoking, anyways it is bad for one's health and the major factor for the development of COPD. There is an occurrence stress and fatigue because of this condition but you have to find ways to de-stress. Communicate with your friends and family, join some support group etc because then all your stress would be relieved.

Burning of calories occur because of breathing activities, therefore, you must know how to conserve all the energy. Plan, maintain and try to avoid undertaking tasks that are tough. This way you would be able to save a lot of energy. Use breathing methods and techniques to control it, for example, pursing your lips, breathing through your diaphragm etc.

Eat right and rest a lot prior to eating. Eat meals in small quantities and ones which is highly nutritious. Chew and evenly breathe while eating. Exercise, travel and consult your doctor on a regular basis. Life doesn't end here; it is the new beginning for you.

Giving a boost to your Emotional Quotient!

We have endless remedies as to what we can do to help you living with COPD. A few of these are as we have mentioned few times along the course of the book are as follows:

- Maintain a safe environment
- Communicate but be sure to be conserving your energy in the process and also avoid any kind of unnecessary activities
- Follow a healthy diet
- Exercise regularly

All of these pointers are regularly given to COPD victims and it is important to follow each one of them. However these are things which will keep you physically going healthy and strong. Have you ever thought of your emotional health? You should never underestimate the value of that and make sure that you constantly work at them and you would be pleasantly surprised how much better you can feel after that.

It is important to be helping yourself while you help others in making yourself recover and feel active and good. There are certain pointers which can help us in enjoying our life by giving a boost to the emotional quotient within us:

- Make an effort to go out regularly. This would possibly take some time and motivation but it is essential to go ahead and enjoy the outdoor activities. Whether it is just for a meal or just a drive or maybe visiting your grandchild's annual function it is necessary to step out. There is no need to feel conscious about the oxygen mask since it is like a medicine which has to be taken so why would you need to worry about it at all. You are just very sensibly taking care of your health!
- It is important and absolutely essential that you do not undertake any kind of stress. It is important that you keep telling yourself-“Is it so important” or “I can just let it go”. These thoughts will help in your self development and give confidence and play a great role in relaxing your mind. Don't let small matters make a big difference to you!
- Everyone's life is unique and each one of us has a different story to narrate. Thus sit down with a friend or your grandchild and talk about your life and maybe record it too which you will be glad you did when you enjoy it at a later date
- It is important to help yourself by maybe helping others. The feeling of doing that is indescribable and will make you feel ecstatic. I can vouch for that. For instance, just go ahead and send a cheering note to someone who is down in the dumps, or maybe help and volunteer in a local hospital nearby, or a school or library close by which requires you to do a sitting down job. On the other hand, you can read to a small child or help someone by giving them just a small ride and the list can go on. Any small step to help others will give you a feel good factor which will enable you to feel happy and positive about yourself.
- At times during “bad breathing” days sit down and occupy yourself by maybe reading, playing a game, watching a movie or solving a puzzle etc.

- Lastly give yourself a chance to travel. It is not an impossible task. Be safe and organized and it will help you to gather loads of memories and do new things. This will refresh you and give a new high to your emotional quotient!

These few pointers will help the COPD patients to lease out a new life and these few pointers by helping yourself will be a sure shot way to make others around you very happy as well!



There is no “End Stage” of COPD- A myth?

When we hear “... you have end stage COPD” it is probably the most confusing as well as the frightening thing to hear. However let us examine how far this hold true.

We will discuss further on this and get an insight of the four stages of COPD .before that we need to follow certain steps which will help in clearing our mind and understanding the concept better

Understand Facts:

Firstly get your facts straight. We need to get a thorough check of the pulmonary functions and the associated tests and its results.

Understand numbers:

The doctor usually would give a number which would be a result of the pulmonary function test. Moreover the technician would further question you regarding sex, race, vital statistics, age etc and would put these into place for some calculations which would normally give results of what volume and flow rates should be present in a set of healthy lungs. This is knows as “normal predicted”.

It is vital to understand the numbers from these various tests before jumping to any kind of conclusion. Based on these numbers we study the following stages of COPD:

Definition of FEV₁ (forced expiratory volume per second): It is the amount of air which you would blow out in the first second. It is a very important factor used to determine COPD.

Stage I: Mild COPD

In this case FEV₁ is minimum eighty percent of normal predicted. Symptoms might or might not be noticeable.

Stage II: Moderate COPD

In this case FEV₁ is between fifty and eighty percent of normal predicted. You could be faced with breathlessness and exertion; also chronic cough might or might not be there.

Stage III: Severe COPD

In this case FEV₁ ranges between thirty and fifty percent of normal predicted. You get tired and breathless frequently, and also suffer from frequent exacerbations. Extra treatment or hospitalization could happen at times.

Stage IV: Very Severe (at times referred to end-stage) COPD

In this case FEV₁ is below thirty percent of normal predicted levels. Breathlessness is a common factor even while you are resting.

Thus you would realize now that numbers are misleading and mean different things for different people. Thus while reading numbers you should be aware of what you are dealing with.

Don't give up

Thus it is important to have hope and understand the matter correctly. You should realize the fact that with proper treatment and care you can live for many years despite having minimal lung function.

The term “end stage” is different for different people and is looked at with different perspectives. For instance a person who is a respiratory therapist working with all kinds of COPD patients in pulmonary rehabilitation would surely have a different angle to this in comparison to a doctor who just sees patients when they are sick.

So being told that you have “end stage COPD” is surely not a death sentence! There is lot which is possible for you to do and you can still have a long and healthy life. Make the most of your day-to-day life even if you are a COPD patient!

