



Exercising with a Lung Condition

Physiotherapy Departments

www.ulh.nhs.uk

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Aim of the leaflet

This leaflet is aimed at patients who have been identified as having reduced exercise ability as a result of a lung condition.

This leaflet aims to tell you about the benefits of exercise when you have a lung condition.

Please make sure you read through the whole of this booklet before you begin any exercise.

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Contact details

If you have any questions about any of the information contained in this leaflet please contact your physiotherapist at:

Lincoln County Hospital, Physiotherapy Dept.
Tel: 01522 573945

Pilgrim Hospital, Physiotherapy Dept, Boston
Tel: 01205 445359

Grantham and District Hospital, Physiotherapy Dept.
Tel: 01476 464253

County Hospital Louth, Physiotherapy Dept.
Tel: 01507 631234

All departments open Monday to Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm

Your Physiotherapists name is:

.....

Acknowledgements

Information provided is based on recommendations from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE).

References

British Lung Foundation (n.d) Pulmonary rehabilitation leaflet.

NICE (2009) Rehabilitation after critical illness. NICE.

Institute for Clinical Symptoms Improvement (2013) Diagnosis and management of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

Other resources, support groups etc.

British Lung Foundation www.blf.org.uk

Breathe Easy Support Group.

‘Support for people affected by lung conditions including friends, family and carers’

Groups held in Lincoln, Gainsborough, Grantham and Sleaford.
Phone 0300 3030253 for more details.

Introduction

As a result of your lung condition, when you move around or exercise you may be experiencing some or all of the symptoms listed below.

- Shortness of breath
- Wheeze
- Cough
- Increased phlegm production
- Malaise
- Fatigue
- Decreased exercise tolerance

This booklet will introduce you to low level exercise suitable for completion when you have a lung condition, have been in hospital or within the first few weeks of returning home. Many of the principles can be used at any stage of your condition.

When completing the exercises, you may feel easily tired at first, which is normal as your muscles need time to build their strength again. It may take some time until you feel that you are back to normal. Everyone is different and so it is impossible to give an exact timetable for how much exercise you should take and when.

This booklet aims to give you general advice about exercise and how regular exercise should form part of your daily routine. It may be quite a shock when you realise how weak you have become as a result of your lung condition.

As a result of your lung condition you may have reduced strength in your thigh muscles (quadriceps) and arms. Completing the suggested exercises in this booklet should help to reduce the impact that reduced muscle power will have on completing your daily activities.

Common questions about exercise

“Am I too old to take up exercise?”

Whatever age you are it is possible to take exercise. Even if all you can manage is a few minutes of home exercise each day you will start to feel the benefits.

“I get breathless very quickly when I exercise - should I continue?”

As you build up your exercise you will find you will gradually be able to do more before you get breathless. As with all your other muscles, the muscles involved in breathing have got weaker and smaller. They will gradually get stronger as you exercise. This is also true for patients with chronic chest problems. To become fitter you need to be active enough to make you feel slightly breathless for at least ten to twenty minutes.

“I have a chronic chest problem, is it safe for me to exercise?”

Yes, research has shown that chronic chest sufferers benefit from graded exercise because it makes their muscles able to use oxygen more efficiently.

When completing these exercises follow the guidance from this booklet and from your Physiotherapist. Remember to complete the exercise diary to monitor your progress.

Complete the warm up exercises each time you complete any of the other exercises to prepare your muscles.

8. Standing tall behind a chair, slowly move one leg out to the side. Hold for 5 seconds and repeat _____ times.



9. Standing tall behind a chair, slowly bend both knees to a squat, hold for 5 seconds and slowly return to a stand. Repeat _____ times.



10. Start in a sitting position with your arms across your chest, slowly come up into standing, and slowly return to sitting in a controlled manner. Repeat _____ times.



Exercise Programme 2

You should try these once you feel happy in standing. You may need to rest your hands on a table, chair or a walking frame. Try these when your physiotherapist instructs you to. If you have returned home and are finding the seated exercises easy then try these standing exercises.

6. Standing tall behind a chair, resting hands on the back, march on the spot. Repeat _____ times or for _____ seconds.



7. Standing tall behind a chair, squeeze your bottom together and move one leg out behind you. Hold for 5 seconds and repeat _____ times.



Exercise Programme

Warm up/Cool down

- a. In sitting, alternately move from your toes to your heels touching the floor. Repeat _____ times.



- b. Sit or stand. Lift your shoulders and relax. Repeat _____ times.



Exercise Programme 1

These are the easier of the exercises so complete these before you move onto the standing exercises.

1. Sit on a chair. Pull your toes up and straighten your knee. Hold for 5 to 10 seconds and slowly relax your leg. Repeat _____ times.



2. Sit or stand. Lift your arm up letting the thumb lead the way. Repeat _____ times on alternate arms.



3. Sitting on a chair. Lift your leg off the seat keeping the knee bent. Return to the starting position. Repeat _____ times on alternate legs.



4. Sitting on a chair. Step one leg out to the side then return it back to the middle. Repeat _____ times on alternate legs.



5. In lying, bend one knee and place your foot flat. Keeping the other leg straight, lift it off the bed slowly then lower. Repeat _____ times with both legs.

