

Living Well with COPD™

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

A Learning Tool for Patients and Their Families

Managing Your Breathing and Saving Your Energy

- Understanding how breathing works
- Reducing shortness of breath
 - Breathing techniques
 - Body positions
- Clearing your secretions: cough techniques
- Applying energy conservation principles

This guide belongs to:

2nd Edition 2005

The skills you need to manage your COPD

COPD is a disease that can seriously affect every part of your life. Simple activities you once took for granted, such as taking a walk or getting dressed, can become major challenges. Flare-ups, or worsening symptoms – the main cause of hospitalization in people with COPD – can further affect your quality of life. Fortunately, there is a lot that you can do to overcome and prevent these limitations, and improve your well-being. This is why we have created this series of workbooks on COPD self-management.

How can this program help me with self-management of the disease?

This is an educational program in which you learn skills to manage your disease and adopt healthy new lifestyle behaviours. This series of workbooks is part of that program, based on real-life experiences.

Medical experts and patients with COPD – people just like you – worked together to update this program that you can customize for yourself. National¹ and international^{2,3} guidelines agree that patient education and self-management are valuable for people with COPD.

We also tested this educational program as part of a clinical trial. And the results were very encouraging. Patients who used these workbooks in collaboration with their healthcare worker, “case manager” or resource person and physician had fewer hospitalizations and fewer emergency room visits. Their overall health also improved, enabling them to do more of the activities they enjoyed, and better cope with their disease.^{4,5}

This is your guide. Use it to write down your questions or concerns. Share it with people close to you so that they can understand what you are going through. Discuss whatever thoughts and feelings you have with your case manager or resource person and your physician.

Good luck with your program.

Dr. Jean Bourbeau



Montreal Chest Institute

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Welcome to “Managing your Breathing and Saving your Energy” of the learning series Living Well with COPD

When you have COPD, the simple act of breathing can become an effort. Not being able to breathe easily can affect every part of your life. It can affect your body by making you tire out quickly. It can also affect your emotions by making you feel tense and anxious.

Living Well with COPD means reducing your symptoms by managing your breathing and saving your energy in day-to-day activities.

In this module you will learn:

1. How breathing works
2. Pursed-lip breathing technique
3. Body positions to reduce shortness of breath
4. Cough techniques: controlled cough and huffing technique
5. Principles of energy conservation