

## Patient information

# Importance of exercising with a lung condition



## Reasons why you should exercise

Lung conditions can be debilitating both physically and emotionally.

Symptoms such as breathlessness, fatigue, muscle wasting and anxiety can lead to inactivity and isolation.

This can make you more susceptible to infections and falls and can take away your independence.



Exercising cannot cure your lung condition, but it can help to:

- Reduce your symptoms
- Breathe more efficiently
- Improve your balance
- Improve your fitness levels and your tolerance to exercise
- Improve your overall mood
- Meet people
- Improve your overall quality of life

## Types of exercises and why they are important

**Upper body exercises:** These exercises help to strengthen the muscles in your arms, shoulders, neck and upper chest. Many of the muscles in these areas are important in helping with your breathing. They will also help to expand your chest.

**Leg strengthening exercises:** These exercises help to strengthen the muscles in around your hips, buttocks, thighs and calf area. These will help to keep your legs strong and improve your balance. Better balance will also help to reduce the effort of breathing.

**Cardiovascular exercises:** These exercises help to get your heart pumping and your circulation moving. They help to improve your fitness levels and tolerance to exercise.

**Balance exercises:** These exercises will help to improve your balance and co-ordination. Poor balance can have a significant, negative effect on your breathing.

## Your exercises



**Wall Press-Ups**



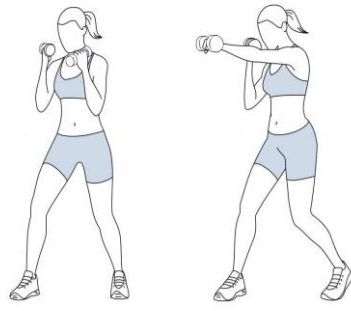
**Bicep Curls**



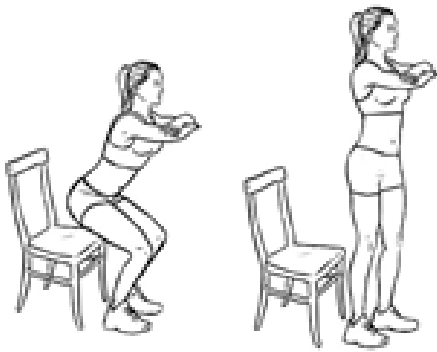
**Upright Rows**



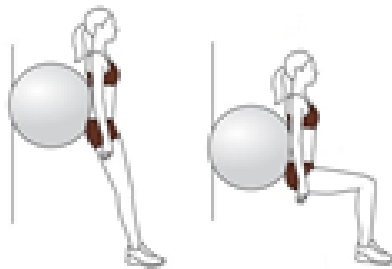
**Side Taps**



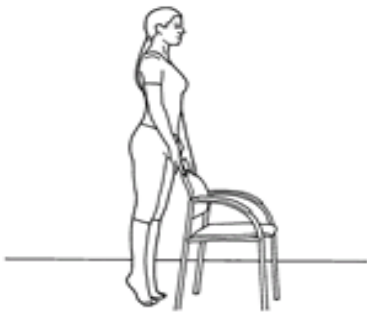
**Punches**



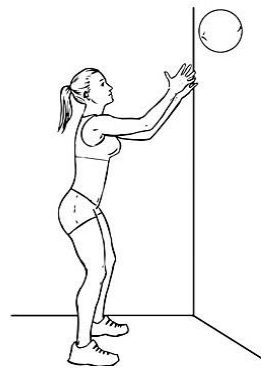
**Sit to Stand**



**Squats**



**Heel Raises**



**Ball Throw**



**Knee Extensions**



**Step Ups**



**Marching on the Spot**



**Shuttle Walk**

## BORG Breathlessness Scale

Level	Description
0	<b>Nothing at all</b> <i>(no breathlessness at all)</i>
0.5	<b>Just noticeable</b> <i>(slightly breathless, but I can do this all day)</i>
1	<b>Very slight</b> <i>(still more than comfortable, but breathing a little harder now)</i>
2	<b>Slight</b> <i>(feeling good, getting a little warm, but I can hold a conversation)</i>
3	<b>Moderate</b> <i>(beginning to feel you're working)</i>
4	<b>Somewhat difficult</b> <i>(I'm just above comfortable. A bit puffed/sweaty, but still able to hold a conversation)</i>

5	<b>Difficult</b> <i>(I can still talk, but I am definitely breathless and definitely hot and sweaty)</i>
6	<b>Moderately severe</b> <i>(I can still talk, but I don't really want to. I am feeling very pushed)</i>
7	<b>Severe</b> <i>(very breathless and struggling to keep going)</i>
8	<b>Very severe</b> <i>(I can grunt more than talk. I can't keep up this pace for long)</i>
9	<b>Very, very severe</b> <i>(Struggling to get my breath. Unable to talk. Need to stop soon!)</i>
10	<b>Maximal effort</b> <i>(I can't go any further! Ready to stop/pass out!)</i>

You should aim to maintain your breathing in the BORG 3 to 4 zones whilst exercising

## Tips for successful exercising

- Wear loose-fitting clothing and comfortable, flat shoes.
- Make sure you use your walking aid if you have one.
- Exercise little and often.
- Pace yourself!! Break the number of repetitions of an exercise into smaller parts. This will allow your breathing time to recover and will help you to feel more in control.
- **Do not plough on with your exercises if you are starting to feel more than moderately breathless!** Continuing will make you feel out of control, increase your anxiety and it will take longer for you to recover.
- Make sure that you are breathing regularly whilst exercising and **not holding your breath.**
- Breathe out (exhale) when you are using extra effort.
- When you are breathless, **stop** what you are doing and use your **positions of ease.**
- Exercise with a friend / relative to keep you motivated.

- Have regular drinks to keep yourself hydrated.
- **Do not compare yourself to, or try to keep up with, other people!**

## Useful contacts

Physiotherapy Department  
West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust  
Hardwick Lane, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, IP33 2QZ  
Tel: 01284 713300

Suffolk Community Healthcare Care Co-ordination Centre (CCC)  
Tel: 0300 123 2425

West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust is actively involved in clinical research. Your doctor, clinical team or the research and development department may contact you regarding specific clinical research studies that you might be interested in participating in. If you do not wish to be contacted for these purposes, please email [info.gov@wsh.nsh.uk](mailto:info.gov@wsh.nsh.uk). This will in no way affect the care or treatment you receive.

*If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities please visit the website for AccessAble (the new name for DisabledGo) <https://www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/west-suffolk-nhs-foundation-trust>*



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