



A Member of  SOLUTIONHEALTH

Stress Management & Relaxation

Living with Lung Disease

What is Stress?

- Stress, by definition, is the inability to cope with a threat (real or imagine) to your well-being, which results in a series of responses and adaptations by your body.
- Our bodies respond to stressful situations mentally, physically and emotionally.
- Stress can lead to poor health and even injury.
- Knowing how to manage it can help make life a little easier.

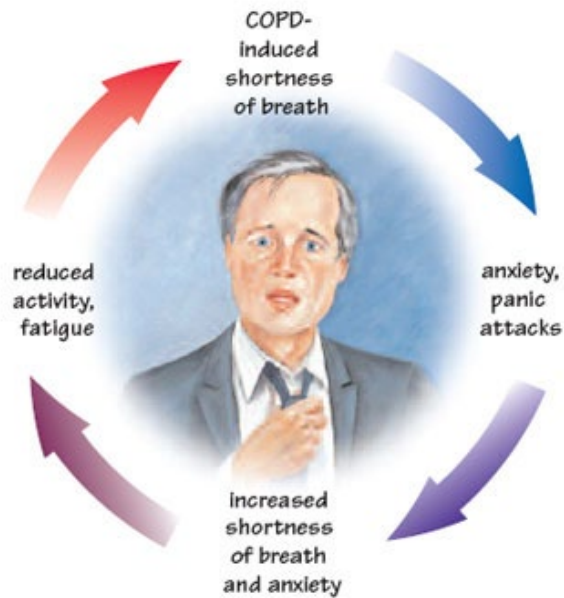


Effects of Stress & Anxiety on your Well-Being

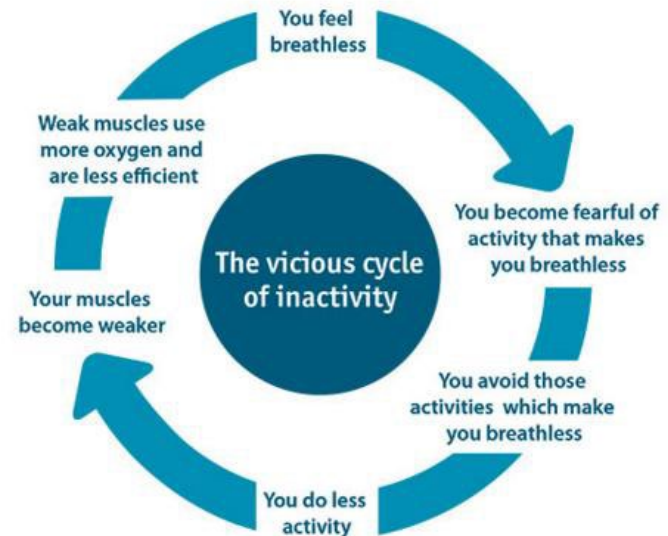
- Decreases your energy and motivation
- May cause more flares (trigger) in your lung disease
- Vicious cycles of Anxiety-Breathlessness Cycle overflows to the Inactivity Cycle
- You breathe faster, which makes you feel more short of breath
- When it feels hard to breathe, you feel more anxious
- When you feel more anxious, you feel more short of breath
- You get stuck in what's called the "Dyspnea Cycle"

Lung Disease Vicious-Cycles Anxiety-Breathlessness & Inactivity

Anxiety- Breathlessness Cycle



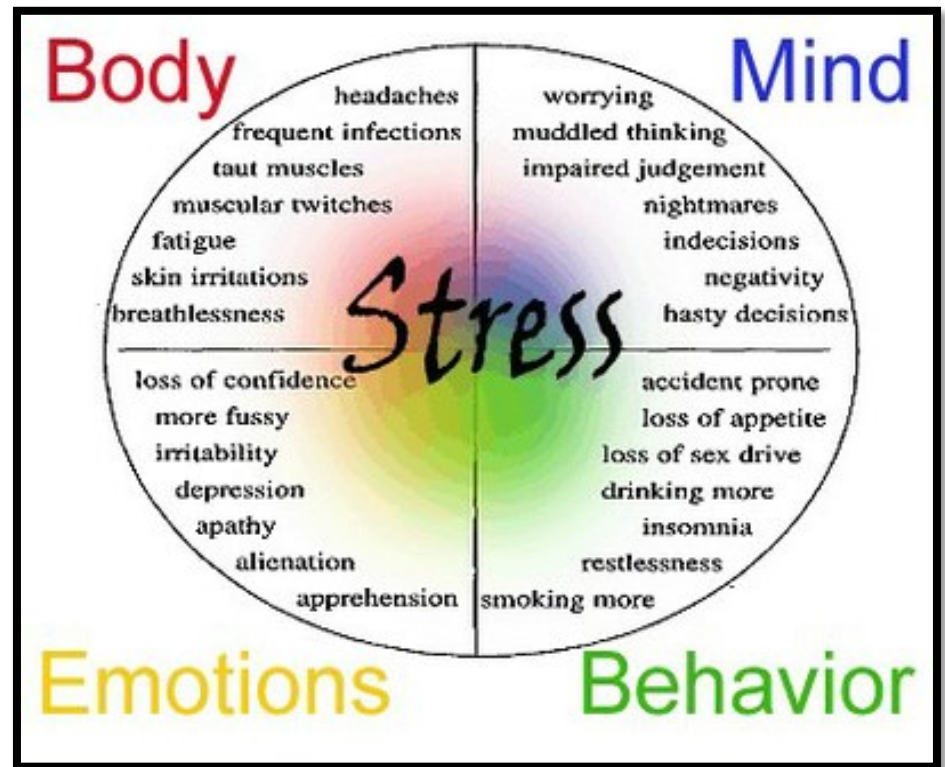
Vicious Cycle of Inactivity



Stress Warning Signs

Symptoms of TOO much stress

- Fatigue
- Mental confusion
- Muscle spasms
- Dizziness & headaches
- Nightmares
- Feeling sick
- Trouble sleeping
- Increased stress
- Trouble with breathing



The Stress Response= Survival Mode

- Not all stress is negative.
- Both stress and anxiety cause us to make changes in our lives. These changes are necessary, for without them, our own interest could be jeopardized.
- Stress signals that danger may be present, this in turn helps us to formulate an action to handle that danger...



Education is a Powerful Tool!

Fear of the unknown may worsen the situation

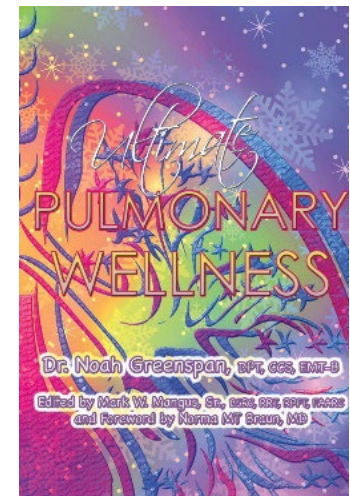
The more you know about your health condition, the better you'll be in making decisions about your care. This will decrease or reduce your stress for you will have a greater control over your health.

- Talk with your health care provider-ask specific questions
- Use reliable and accurate websites regarding to your health questions:
 - American Thoracic Society (ATS)
 - Breathe NH/American Lung Association (ALA)
 - COPD Foundation & Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation
- Be aware of your body. Note what makes you feel better &/or worse.
Keep a medical journal. Share with your health care team.
- **BE PROACTIVE!!!**



Social Support=Best Support

- Reach out to trusted family, friends or clergy
- Talk it out. Share your thought and feelings, fears, needs, and accomplishments!
- Support Groups: Ultimate Pulmonary Wellness (online)
Breathe NH/American Lung Association
COPD Foundation COPD 360 Social (online)
Facebook private group page
- Pulmonary Rehabilitation



Management Strategies

It is extremely important to take care of your **Emotional** health as well as your physical health-esp with a CHRONIC illness.

In addition to the everyday challenges people face, a new layer of stressors evolve. You may need to:

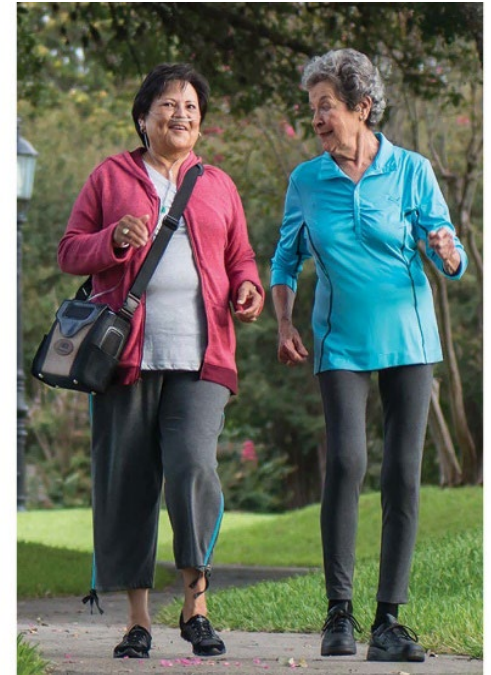
- Cope with pain or discomfort from you illness
- Take steps to mange your conditions-practice self-care
- Adjust to new limitations that may be placed on your life
- Manage increased financial pressures
- Cope with feelings of frustration, anxiety and even isolation.

It can be stressful, but **YOU CAN** take steps to maximize your quality of life and minimize the challenges of living with a chronic respiratory disease.

Importance of Exercise

Top reasons to exercise:

- Improves Quality of Life (QOL)
- Increase ease of performing Activities of Daily Living (ADL's)
- Improves circulation to help body use oxygen better
- Weight control
- Lowers your blood pressure
- Reduce your respiratory rate
- Decrease stress & anxiety levels by elevating mood through endorphin release-body's natural pain killer
- Increase ease of performing Activities of Daily Living (ADL's)
- Promotes improved/restful sleep
- Increase your overall independence-develops confidence & self esteem



A Good Night's Sleep

- Required sleep varies among individuals. But, it is important to establish routines that allow adequate sleep and periodic rest periods. Most adults require 7-9 hours of sleep to be their best.
- Sleep is not feeling rested; But it's important for your immune system.
- Guidelines that encourage a good night's sleep:
 - Avoid caffeine or alcohol in the evening
 - Do not work, watch TV, or use digital media prior to bed
 - Maintain a regular schedule of waking, going to bed weekdays & weekends
 - Sleep in a cool, dark, quiet space
 - Exercise regularly-better quality of sleep is often reported
 - If oxygen is prescribed for sleep-USE IT!



Laughter is the Best Medicine



According to the Mayo Clinic: “When you start to laugh, it doesn’t just lighten your load mentally, it actually induces physical changes in your body”.

Short Term:

Stimulate many organs. Laughter enhances your intake of oxygen-rich air, stimulates your heart, lungs and muscles, and increases the endorphins that are released by your brain.

- **Activate and relieve your stress response.** A rollicking laugh fires up and then cools down your stress response, and it can increase and then decrease your heart rate and blood pressure. The result? A good, relaxed feeling.
- **Soothe tension.** Laughter can also stimulate circulation and aid muscle relaxation, both of which can help reduce some of the physical symptoms of stress.

Long Term:

Improve your immune system. Negative thoughts manifest into chemical reactions that can affect your body by bringing more stress into your system and decreasing your immunity. By contrast, positive thoughts can actually release neuropeptides that help fight stress and potentially more-serious illnesses.

- **Relieve pain.** Laughter may ease pain by causing the body to produce its own natural painkillers.
- **Increase personal satisfaction.** Laughter can also make it easier to cope with difficult situations. It also helps you connect with other people.
- **Improve your mood.** Many people experience depression, sometimes due to chronic illnesses. Laughter can help lessen your depression and anxiety and may make you feel happier.



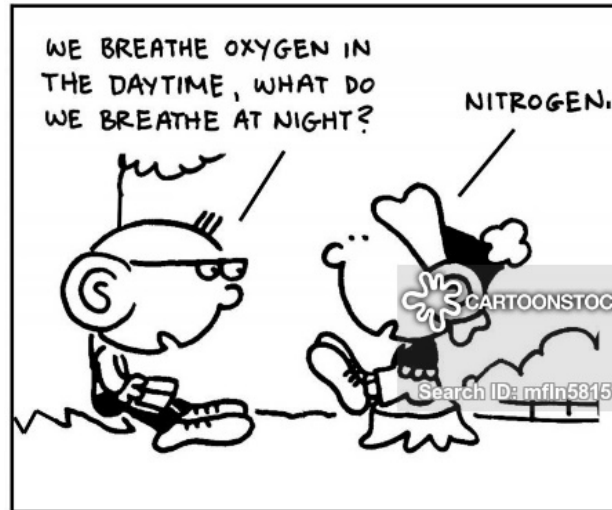
Laugh!





Laughter makes us feel better!

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"My doctor told me to avoid any unnecessary stress, so I didn't open his bill."

Basic Meditation

- Sit on a chair perhaps with a blanket over your lap
- Fold your hand on the blanket with the palms facing up
- Either close your eyes, or look at a candle, breathe and count in your mind with each breath
- Breathe with your stomach (diaphragmatic breathing)-in through your nose and out through your mouth. Let the rate be natural
- Do your best to increase the time between the thoughts coming into your head. It's best to just focus on ONE thing, a candle, a spot on the wall, etc

Muscle Relaxation

- You can do this sitting or laying down
- Close your eyes
- Work from your feet on up
- Start with the toes and picture everything separating with each breath. As you breath out, picture your toes loosening, than all the joints in your feet, muscles, tendons, all loosen up with each exhale and slowly work your way up your body. Take a minute to do this
- Once relaxed, become aware of your breathing. As you breathe out, say the word “ONE” silently to yourself. For example, breath IN...OUT, “ONE”, IN...OUT, “ONE” etc.
- Continue to 15 minutes. At the end of 15 minutes. Stop repeating the word “ONE” and sit quietly for about a minute. The slowly open your eyes

Muscle Relaxation Exercises/Techniques

1. SIT ON A CHAIR.



2. SCRUNCH UP YOUR FACE...

THEN RELAX IT.



3. TENSE YOUR ARMS...

THEN RELAX THEM.



4. TENSE UP YOUR SHOULDERS AND CHEST...

THEN RELAX THEM.



5. TENSE UP YOUR LEGS...

THEN RELAX!



6. BREATHE IN RELAXATION...

BREATHE OUT TENSION.



Guided Imagery

There are many online scripts that you can follow, or someone can read to you, you can go onto www.youtube.com where you'll find guided imagery sessions.

- <http://www.the-guided-meditation-sit.com/guided-imagery-scripts.html>

"MAN IS NOT DISTURBED
BY THE EVENTS BUT BY
THE VIEW HE TAKES OF
THEM" - Epictetus



Relaxation & Meditation Apps

Calm



Paced Breathing



Mindfulness

