

I'm Frightened, What Can I Do?

Many people are. You've been told you have Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease and hopefully your doctor has explained what that is, and why you may have it.

Fear, anger, depression, crying, these things are normal responses. You've a LOT of questions going through your mind such as;

- **Can it be cured?** *No. It's preventable and treatable and although it can't be cured, you CAN learn to manage it better AND slow the progression.*
- **How come I'm the "only" one?** *You're not. A recent survey by the Canadian Lung Association puts the number of people with COPD at 1.5 Million in Canada with another 1.6 million individuals who may have it but haven't been diagnosed.*
- **But they've put me on oxygen.** *You always have been. There's no reason to stop doing the things you enjoy; fishing, gardening, knitting, including travel. However; you do need to find the best way to carry around the "extra oxygen."*

Your life is far from over!!!



Tell Me MORE!

- ⇒ Ask your doctor about what medicines and treatments are available. Try to be put on the best and latest ones.
- ⇒ If you've not yet had a formal Spirometry or PFT (Pulmonary Function Test) ASK your Dr. for it!
- ⇒ If you smoke; QUIT.
- ⇒ Exercise. Including the least expensive form, yet one of the most effective; walking. The MORE you do, the MORE you will be able to do!
- ⇒ Eat balanced, nutritional meals and snacks. You NEED proper nutrition for this disease.
- ⇒ Get adequate rest and try to avoid stress.
- ⇒ Overweight? Work at losing it. Underweight? Work at gaining it.
- ⇒ Avoid people with colds. A MUST.
- ⇒ Keep your hands clean, wash with soap and water. Use hand sanitizers.
- ⇒ Get a flu shot and pneumonia vaccine.
- ⇒ Ask Questions. Get educated about this disease.

⇒ Ask your Dr. for a COPD Action Plan. If he/she doesn't have the form, it can be downloaded from the Canadian Thoracic Society's website.

⇒ Learn to recognize the symptoms of an exacerbation (flare up/worsening of your symptoms) and DON'T wait to take action!

⇒ Take your prescribed meds regularly; even when you're feeling well.

⇒ Finding it harder to breathe after a big meal? Try eating slower and/or eat smaller, more frequent meals throughout the day.

⇒ Get into a rehab program if you can. Ask your Dr. about it.

⇒ Join a Support Group. It can be "on-line" or through a local club. But, get involved.

⇒ Learn to pace yourself. Give yourself lots of time and try not to rush.

⇒ Learn proper breathing techniques such as Pursed Lip (PLB) and Diaphragmatic Breathing.

Always carry your rescue puffer!

You CAN Manage This Disease but FIRST, You MUST Learn About it!

There are very many good and informative sites on the internet. There's just as many that are misleading. And; sometimes we misinterpret even the best of information. Use trusted sites. And when you don't understand something.... ASK.

You MUST be your own Advocate!

Learning doesn't happen overnight and with this disease, the impact it has on one person might be totally different than on another. Learn what's "normal" for YOU!

**Remember, don't let this disease control your life!
There ARE things you CAN DO!**

COPD Canada Patient Network

Patients Helping Patients



**Together we CAN!
Care Advocate Network**



For further information about COPD and our organization, please visit

www.copdcanada.ca

or contact us at

Contact@copdcanada.ca



We comply with the HONCode Standard for Trustworthy Health Information

I've Been Diagnosed with COPD!!!



What Can I Do?

LOTS!!!