Fighting Cabin Fever

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COPD and Cabin Fever

When you have COPD, you often spend a lot of time indoors. A lack of energy and mobility paired with COPD triggers outside can mean that before you know it, you're spending almost every day inside your house.

While your indoor environment may be safe for your COPD, if you do not go about it correctly, you can end up having cabin fever. By learning more about what exactly cabin fever is and how you can avoid it, you can better enjoy your time spend indoors and maintain your quality of life.

What is Cabin Fever?

As human beings our minds and bodies are designed to be stimulated in a few different ways. Social interaction, exploring, learning, and pleasure and all important for a healthy mind and body, but when you have COPD, you can end up spending a lot of time isolated and your needs in those areas may not be met.

Cabin fever is an actual condition that occurs when you spend prolonged periods of time indoors or in isolation. It can lead to depression, irritability, restlessness and similar symptoms. The longer cabin fever continues, the worse these feelings will get. Luckily, there are ways you can beat cabin fever, even if you're stuck inside.

Beating Cabin Fever

By using these tricks, you'll be able to avoid or limit cabin fever, and still protect yourself from COPD exacerbations.

- **Spend time outdoors –** While protecting yourself from harsh weather conditions that could cause a flare-up is important, it's also important that you spend some time outside. By spending just an hour outside each week, you'll provide yourself with the fresh air and vitamin D you need to stay healthy.
- **Pick a hobby –** A COPD friendly hobby can make the time you spend indoors much more enjoyable. The hobby you choose can be something simple like reading a book, but spending just a short amount of time each day doing it will make a big impact on your quality of life.
- **Socialize –** Socializing doesn't have to be done outside of your home. While the Internet does offer some socialization, picking up the phone can provide the same benefits as being there. If possible, invite a friend over each week to spend some quality time catching up.

- **Keep your brain stimulated –** Offering your brain with some form of stimulation is an effective way to prevent cabin fever. Doing a puzzle, like a crossword puzzle or word find will offer your brain with the stimulation it needs to stay healthy.
- **Stay active –** Exercise is important for preventing cabin fever, and the exercise you choose could be as simple as doing a few stair steps each day. By sure to discuss exercising with your physician to ensure you're safe to do so.