Simple Changes That Can Relieve COPD Cough

by PATRICIA BRATIANU

Reduce COPD Cough With Proper Diet and Herbs

If you suffer from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema, asthma or chronic bronchitis, you know you cough frequently. Fortunately, there are steps you can take at home that will reduce coughing, thin mucus, and soothe your chest and throat.

Nutrition

There is a great deal you can do nutritionally to reduce mucus production, ease your COPD cough, help you to breathe easier, and feel an overall boost in your level of wellness.

Lose Weight

If you are overweight, try to take off a few pounds. In addition to other health concerns, being overweight does not allow your lungs to fully expand. This results in shortness of breath, and if you can't take deep breaths, secretions pool in your airways, which may cause you to cough more.

In addition, your risk of developing pneumonia and other respiratory illnesses increases.

Eat Your Veggies

Fill up of fresh fruits and vegetables, as they contain antioxidants and other compounds that relieve inflammation of the lung tissues. One benefit of decreased inflammation is a diminished urge to cough.

Fruits and veggies are also high in vitamins C and E, antioxidants that support the formation of healthy tissues within your entire body. They fight infection, too.

Stay Hydrated

Make sure you are consuming enough fluids, as they thin secretions so you can eliminate them more efficiently.

Some people who have COPD try to limit fluid so they don't have to use the bathroom frequently. Using the bathroom can be tiring and may temporarily make you cough while you exert yourself, but in the long run, you are much better off drinking adequate amounts of fluids.

Don't Stop Eating

Eat foods in amounts that do not make you feel nauseated. With COPD, your lungs may be over-inflated, which can lead to nausea, vomiting and coughing. Try eating six small meals daily.

Consider Supplements

If you get short of breath or are exhausted when you eat, consider the use of liquid supplement drinks. If you have a family member available who can make nutritional fruit smoothies, this is an outstanding option. They can add a non-dairy protein powder to enhance the nutrient values of your shakes.

Hemp or flax seed oils may be added, too. These relieve inflammation and can soothe the urge to cough.

Avoid Salt

Limit your intake of salt and foods that contain hidden salt. Excess salt leads to fluid retention and difficulty breathing. When these conditions occur, you are more likely to feel the urge to cough.

Herbs for COPD Cough

There are many herbs that effectively prevent and relieve coughing, though if you are taking medication, check with your doctor before using herbal remedies. Many of the most effective herbal remedies for coughing are likely to be found in your kitchen cabinets.

You can consume herbs in many forms, but in general I recommend the use of herbal teas for coughs. Hot teas loosen up mucus and soothe the respiratory tract quickly. If you find hot beverages make you cough, drink them at room temperature instead.

Oregano, thyme, cinnamon and basil destroy bacteria and open up air passages. Ginger, especially with honey and lemon, is a time-tested remedy for all respiratory ills. While sage tea is not particularly tasty, it soothes irritated tissues very effectively.

You may experience a sore throat if you cough frequently. If this is so, try making ice pops from the herbal tea.

Lozenges such as slippery elm are soothing, and syrups are excellent, too, as they coat irritated tissues. Cherry bark may be purchased from herb shops and made into a traditional syrup. You may also like to use concentrated tinctures and elixirs. I like to put a few drops of tinctures in a spoonful of soothing local honey.

One herb you may not be familiar with is Chinese star anise. It is found in the spice section of grocery stores. This herb is a fragrant, star-shaped pod used in Asian cooking.

Chinese star anise has been used to relieve spasmodic coughs for centuries, and it’s very gentle and tasty. As an added bonus, Chines star anise relieves feelings of fullness and digestive discomforts. The herb also thins the mucus and quiets coughs.

To make a cup of herb tea, place one teaspoon of dried herb in a container. Pour one cup of boiling water over it. Place a cover on the container and let the herb steep for 20 minutes. Strain out the herb and drink the tea. Most herbal teas are consumed three to four times daily for maximum effectiveness.

Quit All Forms of Smoking

If you have COPD, you already know you need to quit smoking — the above measures will provide little relief if you don't. Perhaps you have wondered if e-cigarettes are an acceptable alternative to traditional cigarettes, or a good way to help you to quit smoking and cough less.

While e-cigarettes are promoted as a harmless alternative to cigarettes, cigars and pipes, they still contain dangerous chemicals. If you smoke an e-cigarette, you are still taking nicotine into your system, as well as being being exposed to deadly acetone, formaldehyde, and a host of other chemicals.

You may even have a chemical sensitivity to the vast array of compounds in e-cigarettes. This can

actually increase your coughing or make you sick. If you have a history of asthma, e-cigarettes may trigger bronchospasm and an asthma attack.

While some manufacturers of e-cigarettes may genuinely hope that their products will help smokers quit, their products are not healthy. You are much better off if you enroll in a program designed to help smokers quit. Try eliminating every third cigarette, and then every other.

Consult with your health care provider about medication, and check with your health department for information about local, economical smoking cessation programs.

Keep on trying. If you can’t quit, cut down. Quit with a buddy. You will cough less, prevent the risk of further ills, feel better, and have more energy.

These are just a few of the many actions which you may take at home to reduce coughing and feel better. Try implementing one of them today and see how you feel.