5 Alternative Treatments That May Help with COPD

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Learn about Other Treatment Options That May Help Relieve COPD Symptoms

If you suffer from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, you may want to consider using some complementary and alternative therapies to help you feel more energetic, breathe easier and obtain the nutrients you may lack.

It is likely that you will still need to use your conventional treatments. However, using alternative treatments for COPD may decrease how frequently you need your emergency medications and may help you feel better overall. There are a wide array of options available to you. Let’s take a look at some of the alternative therapies for COPD.

Herbs

Herbs may be used to supply nutrients, energize and enhance the health of your entire body. You can use herbs to thin mucus, reduce coughing episodes and help you relax.

If you choose to use herbal remedies, I recommend that most herbs be consumed as hot teas so they can help to break up congestion. However, you may prefer to take tinctures or capsules if the herbs are not tasty.

Make a simple tea by pouring one cup of boiling water over a kitchen herb, such as oregano, rosemary, sage or thyme. All of these herbs prevent the growth of microorganisms that cause bacterial infections. They will open up your air passages and make breathing easier.

You can also try a cup of chamomile or licorice root tea. They are tasty teas that will reduce inflammation within your airways.

Ginger tea is delicious, clears airways, improves circulation and is invigorating. Linden tea is soothing, delicate in flavor and may help you sleep better at night.

Supplements

Supplements are an important part of a wellness plan. Here are some important ones to consider taking:

- **Garlic:** If you don't eat it every day, take a supplement to clear your lungs and fight infection.
- **Multivitamin or multimineral:** The most important vitamins you need are A, B complex, C and E. The minerals zinc, copper, calcium and magnesium are necessary for your tissues to heal.
- **Essential fatty acids:** These reduce inflammation and promote comfort.
- **Coenzyme Q10:** 60 milligrams daily will improve oxygenation of your tissues.
- **Grape seed extract:** This is a powerful antioxidant that helps fight infections and restore lung health.
- **Pancreatin or proteolytic enzymes:** These prevent infections, aid your ability to absorb and utilize

nutrients from your diet, and reduce inflammation.

Juicing

Juices are a fantastic choice when you are feeling weak or have a lot of congestion. Add half a teaspoon of flax or olive oil, protein powder, and/or dehydrated spirulina or chlorella to your juices to boost their health properties.

Here are some vegetable juicing guidelines:

- Make vegetable juices out of your favorite colorful veggies.
- Adding onion or garlic will provide you with quercetin, a powerful anti-inflammatory nutrient.
- Include some spicy vegetables, such as bits of hot pepper or horseradish, to open up air passages, improve your energy and aid detoxification.
- Include fresh herbs in your juices.
- Experiment to see what juice blends appeal to you.

Fruit juices provide you with needed enzymes and calories. Blend them with full-fat Greek yogurt if you are underweight for a delicious smoothie.

Chelation Therapy

Chelation therapy is a treatment that removes toxins from your body. If you are, or were, a tobacco user you have higher than normal accumulations of toxic heavy metals and other substances in your tissues. This therapy removes heavy metals, excess calcium and other deposits from blood vessels to improve oxygen. The most effective chelation treatments are administered via the intravenous route.

Chelation therapy may improve your ability to breathe and think, energize you and improve your color. In addition, your circulation and exercise tolerance are likely to increase. If you have history of experiencing chest pain, its intensity and frequency may decrease.

External Treatments

External treatments such as castor oil packs, hydrotherapy, and hot or cold packs, may provide rapid relief of shortness of breath. They aid relaxation and can help you sleep better.

Hydrotherapy treatments provide moisture, which helps loosen mucus so you can cough it up easily. Hot moist packs applied to the back or chest can loosen muscles and enhance deep breathing. Cool packs may be applied to the face for soothing relief.

If you have early stage COPD, you may want to try alternating the water temperature from warm to cold when you shower, as it may help your endurance levels. It is similar in effect to the Scandinavian practice of going in a sauna and then rolling in the snow. However, do not use this treatment if you have an acute illness, are weak, or have advanced COPD or cardiac problems.

Castor oil packs may be made by saturating thick, soft cloths, such as cloth diapers or flannel, with warm castor oil. Apply the packs to your back, chest or abdomen. Castor oil penetrates deeply and decreases congestion, while also helping your muscles relax. Place a heavy towel or plastic over the pack to seal in the heat.

Do not use castor oil or other hot packs if you are unable to sense temperature, or if you are not able to remove them easily.

Therapeutic diets, deep breathing exercises for COPD, acupressure, acupuncture and flower essences may be beneficial. Yoga, tai chi, prayer and meditation are mind-body approaches that may be helpful for you. You may also want to consider using aromatherapy or getting a massage.

By employing complementary and alternative therapies into your wellness plan, you will be able to reach your highest possible level of well-being and be able to live your life to its fullest despite COPD.