How to Reduce COPD Wheezing

by BRENDA VANTA

Reducing Wheezing With COPD

Wheezing is a specific, almost musical sound produced by breathing through narrow, obstructed airways. In people with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), the airways are narrowed, thickened, and filled with excessive mucus. There is also a chronic inflammation that further irritates the airways, and making them narrower by muscle contractions.

There are a few things you can do to help improve wheezing, and other symptoms of COPD as well. Consider the following tips for reducing your COPD wheezing:

Get the Right Treatment

The better your condition is controlled, the more improvement you will experience with your wheezing, and other symptoms as well. See your doctor regularly, as your treatment may be adjusted over time.

For example, inhalers help in two ways: they decrease the airway obstruction, and also reduce the inflammation in the airways. The result: you will breathe easier and have less wheezing.

Try Oxygen Therapy

If you are on oxygen therapy, you should feel better and experience less wheezing when using it. In addition, studies have found that using oxygen at home for more than 15 hours every day can improve your quality of life, help you live longer, and have less confusion and memory problems.

Avoid Pollutants

You should quit smoking and avoid secondhand smoke and any other pollutants. You can also improve the quality of air in your home by removing dust and cleaning.

Consider investing in HEPA filter. Avoid chemicals that can give off fumes and irritate your airways, like household cleaners that contain bleach or ammonia. Instead, use baking soda, vinegar and environmentally-friendly products to clean your home.

Make sure your kitchen and bathroom are well ventilated, as excessive moisture promotes the growth of mold and bacteria, which can cause COPD flare-ups.

Avoid Chemical-Filled Cosmetics

Many cosmetic products are also filled with fragrances and artificial chemicals that can aggravate your wheezing

and breathing problems. Avoid them, and instead use products from health food stores that are made from natural ingredients.

Exercise

Keep your lungs as fit and healthy as possible by working out regularly. A physiotherapist can teach you the best exercises for your condition and fitness levels, as well as energy conservation techniques. This way, you will keep your lungs in shape and save energy to breathe better and feel better.

Choose a Healthy Diet

Rather than eating three large main meals, have smaller meals and a few snacks throughout the day. Avoid highly processed foods and foods high in refined sugar, fats and artificial additives, as they promote inflammation in your body, have little nutritional value, and make you feel tired, too.

Try New Medication

You may think antibiotics can only fight infections, but there is good antibiotic news for COPD patients: a 2011 study featured in the *New England Journal of Medicine* found that the antibiotic azythromycin can help reduce severe wheezing and other symptoms of COPD, if used regularly.

Simply put, this drug can reduce the risk of flare-ups and improve your overall quality of life. Talk to your doctor and see if this antibiotic, or another medication, is suitable for you.