

Top Tips to Improve your Lung Health

With Coronavirus affecting an individual's respiratory system; it is important that we look after our lung health to aid recovery should we be infected by the virus. Here are some top tips to help improve your lung health -

1. Stay hydrated

Lungs rely on hydration to prevent the mucous lining from getting too thick. We don't think about breathing much until it becomes difficult, but our lungs play an important role in maintaining the body's water content. When we exhale, we remove carbon dioxide, but we also eliminate water vapour, which keeps the right balance of water in our system.

2. Quit Smoking

Cigarette smoking is the major cause of lung cancer and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), which includes chronic bronchitis and emphysema. Cigarette smoke can narrow the air passages and make breathing more difficult. It causes chronic inflammation, or swelling in the lung, which can lead to chronic bronchitis. Over time cigarette smoke destroys lung tissue and may trigger changes that grow into cancer. If you smoke, it's never too late to benefit from quitting.

3. Keep active

Better lung health improves muscle function. Strength-training exercises like squats, a brisk walk, lunges, or wall push-ups are worth trying to improve lung health. Whether you are young or old, able-bodied or living with a chronic illness or disability, being physically active can help keep your lungs healthy.

4. Improve your diet

Eating a diet loaded with fruits and vegetables high in anti-oxidants and high-protein foods like milk, fish, eggs, meat, and soy is beneficial for improved lung function, but it also helps those suffering from COPD and other respiratory diseases.

5. Practice Diaphragmatic breathing techniques

Diaphragmatic breathing, sometimes called belly breathing, is a deep breathing technique that engages your diaphragm, a dome-shaped sheet of muscle at the bottom of your ribcage that is primarily responsible for respiratory function. When you inhale, the diaphragm contracts and moves downward. This movement sets off a cascade of events. The lungs expand, creating negative pressure that drives air in through the nose and mouth, filling the lungs with air. When you exhale, the diaphragm muscles relax and move upwards, which drives air out of the lungs through your breath. If you have a lung condition like COPD or asthma, speak with your GP before trying any type of breathing exercise.

6. Learn to laugh

Whether it's a giggle, a chuckle or a laugh out loud - the need for laughter offers plenty of health benefits, including lung health. By taking deeper breaths and longer exhalations this keeps our lungs healthy and flushes stale air from the lungs. Laughing rids the lungs of residual air and in turn enriches our blood with oxygen. When they say laughter is the best medicine, they mean it.

7. Improve your posture

Good posture opens the door for better respiratory function. The longer we sit during the day, the less our body can fight the forces of gravity and maintain a strong, stable core.