

# Improve Your Lung Health Through Exercise

Regular exercise is crucial for individuals with COPD, despite respiratory challenges. It brings various benefits:

1. **Improved Lung Function:** Strengthens respiratory muscles, enhancing lung capacity and efficiency.
2. **Enhanced Endurance:** Boosts cardiovascular health, vital for managing shortness of breath in COPD patients.
3. **Better Oxygen Utilisation:** Promotes efficient oxygen use, reducing breathlessness during daily activities.
4. **Muscle Strength:** Counters muscle weakness associated with COPD, making daily tasks easier.
5. **Weight Management:** Aids in maintaining a healthy weight, reducing strain on the respiratory system.
6. **Improved Mood and Mental Health:** Releases endorphins, alleviating anxiety and depression often experienced by COPD patients.
7. **Social Engagement:** Joining exercise classes fosters community support, combating feelings of isolation.

Before starting any exercise, COPD patients should consult healthcare professionals for a tailored, gradual approach, considering their health status.

## BREATHING EXERCISES



Sit comfortably on a chair with your forearms on the backrest and feet on the ground. Lift your spine gently, relax your shoulders and neck, and pay attention to your breath. Without changing its pace, simply observe it calmly.

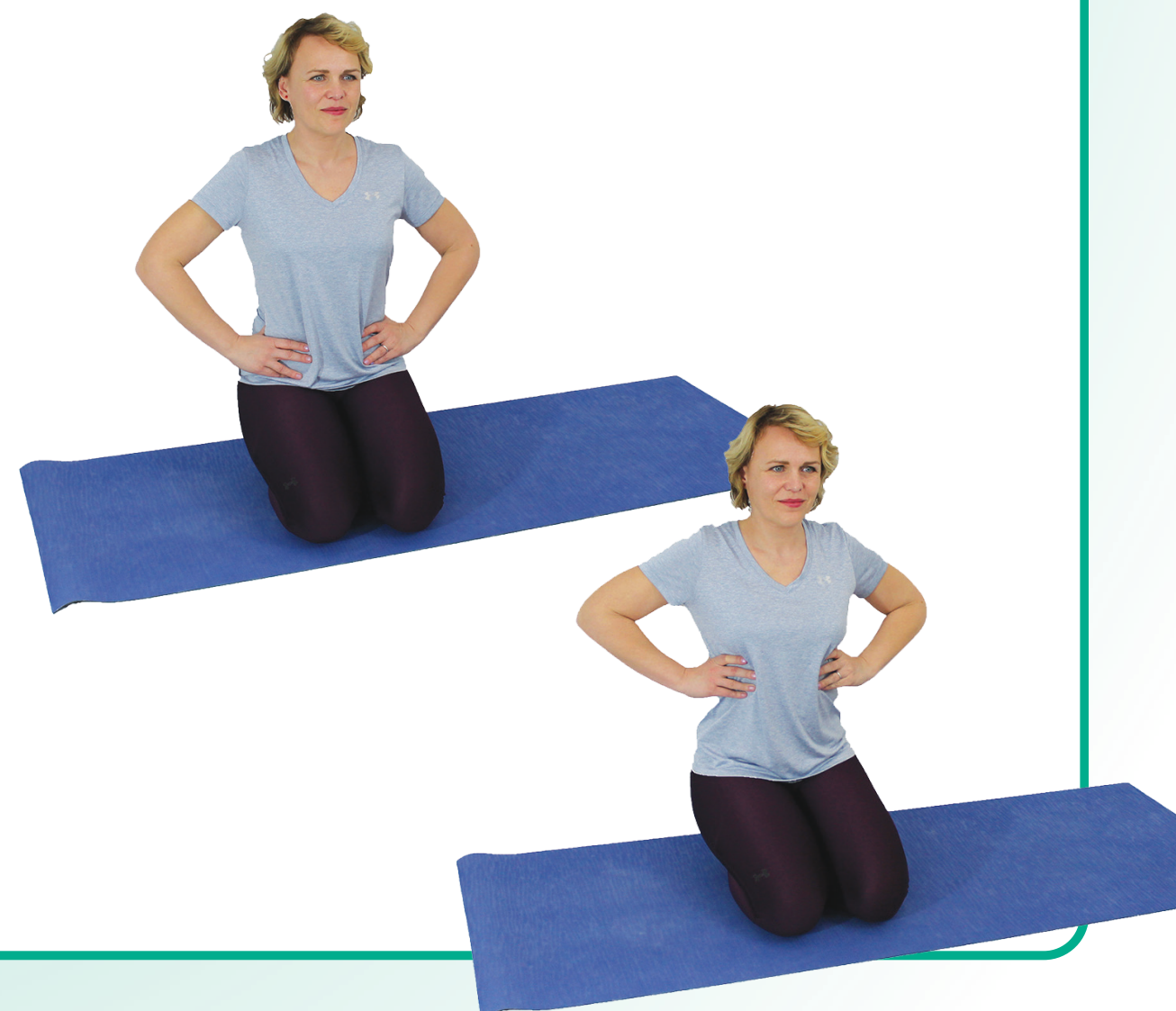
Now, take a slow, steady breath in through your nose, ensuring you control any tendency to cough. Pause for 2-3 seconds at the top of your inhalation, then exhale slowly and steadily through your relaxed mouth. With each breath, aim to increase the amount of air you inhale. During the controlled exhale, engage your abdominal muscles to completely expel the remaining air from your lungs. Repeat this process no more than 4-5 times.

Note: If you encounter an unproductive cough, try a calming manoeuvre such as very slow breathing, quick blinking, swallowing, or any technique that works for you

## BREATHING EXERCISES

This deep breathing can help release any tension in your musculoskeletal system.

1. Sit on a chair or your heels, allowing your hands to rest by your sides while relaxing your shoulders and neck.
2. Begin with slow, calm breathing, focusing on the abdominal area. You'll notice your hands moving apart as you inhale and coming closer as you exhale. Don't intentionally use your abdominal muscles at the end of the exhale, which can aid in controlling coughs and timing them accurately.
3. Maintain the same starting position, but now lift your arms to the lower rib area and repeat the process.
4. Observe your hands moving apart with each inhalation and coming together during exhalation. Breathe steadily.
5. Here, you can experiment with a variation of breathing by intentionally inhaling slowly through your nose and exhaling passively through your mouth.



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## ACTIVITIES



To keep your body strong and support your lungs, it's beneficial to incorporate strengthening exercises into your routine.

An easy option is using flexible rubber bands to strengthen the front of your arms. Kneel or stand in the middle of the bands, hold the ends, and exhale slowly as you bring your palms towards your shoulders. Inhale as you lower your arms slowly. You can work on both hands together or one at a time. Repeat 3-10 times for each hand.

When you sense mucus coming up from your lungs, take a slow, calm breath through your nose. Then, exhale forcefully and briefly, as if you're gently barking, through your mouth. This cough-like manoeuvre helps clear the mucus from your lungs to your mouth. Repeat a maximum of 2-3 times.



## STRETCHING



Sit comfortably in a chair or on your heels. Straighten your spine and let your shoulders and neck relax. If your shoulders are sensitive, keep your right arm along your body.

Exhale and gently tilt your head to the left, either on its own or with the assistance of your left hand, bringing your chin towards your neck.

Hold this position for 3-5 seconds.

Repeat the stretch on the opposite side by tilting your head to the right. This exercise helps ease tension in your neck muscles.

Remember to take regular walks in nature for the overall well-being of your body. If you experience mild or moderate shortness of breath, opt for moderately intense walks 3-5 times a week, lasting 30-60 minutes each time. For those with advanced COPD, aim for 5-7 walks a week, lasting 10-20 minutes each, and include more frequent breaks.

