

Exercise Safety in the Home

The safest and best way to learn how to exercise if you have a chronic lung condition is to take part in a pulmonary rehabilitation program. The Lung Foundation Australia 'Maintaining Movement' in the Home exercise series is designed to help you maintain your physical fitness when you're unable to attend classes such as pulmonary rehabilitation or Lungs in Action. If you're starting or restarting your exercise program, please consult with your healthcare professional.

To be safe during exercise make sure you:

- Have been clearly shown how to perform the exercises by an appropriately trained exercise professional before commencing.
- Have taken your reliever inhalers before exercising if prescribed by your doctor to do so and have them with you throughout.
- Drink enough fluids.
- Use recovery positions to reduce breathlessness.
- Use pursed lip breathing.
- Use your oxygen for exercise, if it has been prescribed by your doctor.
- Are adequately warmed up before commencing.
- Restart your exercise program at a lower intensity if you have not exercised for a while or you have been unwell.
- Unless you are completing chair-based exercises only, please avoid exercising alone if you are a falls risk, or have had a recent fall.
- Avoid strenuous exercise if you have a fever, a flare up of your condition or the common cold.
- Do not exercise immediately after a big meal.
- Do not exercise in extreme heat or cold.
- Never turn your oxygen up higher than prescribed for exercising unless you have discussed this with your doctor.

To locate your nearest pulmonary rehabilitation program contact Lung Foundation Australia on freecall 1800 654 301.

For further information on breathlessness, breathing control and energy conservation refer to chapter 12 of [Better Living with COPD - A Patient Guide](#).

Before you exercise, please ensure you have checked that you do not have any symptoms of a flare up of your lung condition. Further information can be found in chapter 9 of [Better Living with COPD - A Patient Guide](#) named preventing and managing a flare up.

Danger signs

Stop exercising and call 000 if you experience any signs and symptoms of a heart attack.

The warning signs can be varied and may include discomfort and pain in the centre of your chest, along with discomfort to a number of areas in the upper body. For further information on how to recognise a heart attack, The Heart Foundation's resources provide further how to recognise a heart attack before exercising, [here](#).

Stop and rest immediately if you experience any of the below:

- Dizziness or feeling faint
- Excessive wheezing
- Extreme pain
- Coughing up blood
- Extreme shortness of breath
- Blurred vision
- Nausea
- Feeling of palpitations or a racing heart
- Chest pain.

None of these danger signs are normal and should prompt you to seek medical attention.

In an emergency please do not hesitate to call 000.

If you also have diabetes, heart failure, angina or any other diseases that may affect your ability to exercise, discuss these with your health professional to ensure you know the danger signs related to your condition.

If you're ever uncertain about your current condition and safety to exercise, please consult your doctor or healthcare professional.

Any exercises that cause pain in a muscle or joint should be discontinued and reviewed by a medical practitioner.

Additional Resources

[Better Living with Exercise - Your Personal Guide](#) is designed to be used from pulmonary rehabilitation, through to pulmonary maintenance exercise in conjunction with your exercise professional. If you have not previously undertaken pulmonary rehabilitation, you may like to consider discussing the benefits of such a program with your lung specialist or GP.

Information and Support Centre

Our Information and Support Centre team provides guidance, information and support, and connects you to relevant support services. This free and confidential service is available Monday to Friday 8am – 4.30pm (QLD) (excl. public holidays). Please note this service does not offer medical or treatment advice. Free call 1800 654 301 or email enquiries@lungfoundation.com.au.