



Coping with everyday chores

People with moderate or severe COPD can find everyday activities difficult. This is because breathing takes more energy when you have COPD.

To prevent yourself from feeling tired, it can be helpful to find ways to make your everyday chores easier to perform. The tips below will be particularly useful for people with moderate or severe COPD, who are finding everyday chores difficult because of their COPD.

Washing, dressing and grooming

Simple activities such as getting dressed can be tiring, so make sure you plan ahead. Have all your clothes in the room you normally get dressed in, rather than having to walk around the house to find them.

It makes sense to sit down when you are dressing, washing, shaving, putting on make-up, or brushing your teeth. Think about having a stool in the shower, so you don't have to stand up.

Organise your home

Keep things you use every day within easy reach. Ask for assistance in removing clutter from your house if necessary.

Make sure you have chairs in appropriate places. For example, make sure you have one next to the phone so you can sit down when you make calls.

You will want to eat more regularly, so it is essential that your kitchen is properly organised. Make sure all the implements are easy to reach (not at the back of the cupboard) and that your food is stored in easily accessible places.

Eat little and often

Eating too much can cause bloating and breathlessness. It is better to eat 'little and often' – up to five or six small meals a day, rather than two or three large ones. High protein meals are often recommended for people with COPD. Speak to your doctor or qualified dietician for nutrition advice.

Plan your day

You may need more time to do everyday activities than other people, so make sure you plan your day, and your week properly.

Try to avoid doing all the active household jobs on one day. It makes sense to spread them throughout the week, as well as spreading your hobbies and recreation throughout the week, so you have things to look forward to on most days.

Create a routine

Establishing a routine can help overcome a lack of motivation. It is easier to involve other people if you do your activities at the same time every day or every week. You should make time for the things you enjoy, and try to encourage other people to join you.

If you are not on a pulmonary rehabilitation programme, you may want to start your own exercise programme. Make sure to see your doctor first so your doctor can advise you on what is the most appropriate type of exercise.