TIPS FOR PROMOTING HEALTHY LUNGS

The burden of COPD has not gone away during COVID. Keeping your lungs healthy has never been more important! Make healthy lungs a priority in COPD by:

1 STAYING ACTIVE

Many patients become more sedentary after a diagnosis of COPD. Staying active with COPD is important because it helps patients increase their quality of life as well as decreases both hospitalizations and mortality.

2 MEDICATION ADHERENCE

Taking medication correctly is an important part of COPD management. Make sure patients understand how to take the correct dosage as it is prescribed. Inhaler technique is a critical part of COPD management and should be routinely assessed..

3 EATING HEALTY

Maintaining a healthy BMI is important in patients with COPD. Nutritional supplementation in malnourished patients can promote weight gain and lead to improvements in respiratory muscle strength and overall quality of life.

4 KEEPING APPOINTMENTS

Keeping regular appointments is an important part of the COPD management cycle. Patients must regularly check in with their providers to review symptoms, assess their COPD care plan, and adjust interventions as needed.

5 GETTING VACCINATED

Vaccinations can reduce serious illness and death in COPD patients (both from COVID and other types of respiratory infections). In addition, vaccinations have been shown to reduce exacerbations.

6 PARTICIPATING IN PULMONARY REHAB

Not only does pulmonary rehab help improve symptoms and quality of life, it also helps patients maintain physical and emotional participation in everyday activities. In areas where community programs are not available, home-based walking or stationary bicycle programs can be effective.
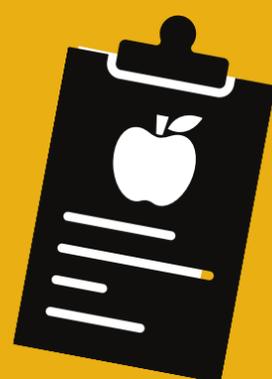
7 REDUCING TOXIC EXPOSURES

Tobacco smoke, indoor and outdoor air pollutants, as well as occupational irritants are all risk factors for COPD. All COPD patients should be counseled on smoking cessation as well as efficient ventilation, clean cooking fuels, and how to avoid other potential irritants.

8 REDUCING COVID RISK

Patients with COPD should follow basic infection control measures to prevent COVID infection, including social distancing, washing hands, and vaccinating if available. In addition, patients with a history of exacerbations should consider shielding measures (i.e. wearing masks, avoiding social contacts), especially during colder seasons.

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