Protecting Your Lungs

Follow these tips to keep your lungs healthy and reduce your risk of lung disease.



Sometimes we take our lungs for granted. They keep us alive and well and for the most part, we don't need to think about them. That's why it is important to prioritize your lung health.

Your body has a natural defense system (https://lung.org/lung-health-diseases/how-lungs-work) designed to protect the lungs, keeping dirt and germs at bay. But there are some important things you can do to reduce your risk of lung disease. Here are some ways to keep your lungs healthy.

Don't Smoke

Cigarette smoking is the major cause of lung cancer (https://lung.org/lung-health-diseases/lung-disease-lookup/lung-cancer) and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD (https://lung.org/lung-health-diseases/lung-disease-lookup/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.



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I Want to Quit

If you smoke, it is never too late to benefit from quitting. We can help whenever you are ready.
(https://lung.org/quit-smoking/i-want-to-quit)

Avoid Exposure to Air Pollutants That Can Damage Your Lungs

Indoor Air Quality

- Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) refers to the air in the buildings and structures that we work, live, and play in as well as the immediate area around these buildings and structures.
- IAQ is important for ALL of us since we spend up to 90% of our time indoors.
- It can be surprising to learn that indoor air can be even more polluted than the air outdoors.
- Secondhand smoke, chemicals in the home and workplace, mold and radon all can cause or worsen lung disease.
- You can take steps to improve your indoor air quality (https://lung.org/clean-air/at-home).

Talk to your healthcare provider if you are worried that something in your home (https://lung.org/clean-air/at-home), school (https://lung.org/clean-air/at-school)or work (https://lung.org/clean-air/at-work)may be making you sick.

Outdoor Air Pollution

The air quality outside can vary from day to day and sometimes is unhealthy to breathe. Knowing how outdoor air pollution (https://lung.org/clean-air/outdoors) affects your health and useful strategies to minimize prolonged exposure can help keep you and your family well. Climate change (https://lung.org/clean-air/climate-change) and natural disasters (https://lung.org/clean-air/emergencies-and-natural-disasters) can also directly impact lung health.

To protect your lungs from outdoor pollution consider the following:

- Avoid exercising outdoors on bad air days
- Avoid exercising near high traffic areas
- Check Airnow.gov (http://www.airnow.gov/) to find out the daily air conditions in your area
- Don't burn wood or trash



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How to Wear a Mask

Different types of masks serve different purposes. Learn when and how to choose the best option.
(https://lung.org/lung-health-diseases/wellness/masks)

Get Regular Check-ups

Regular check-ups help prevent diseases, even when you are feeling well. This is especially true for lung disease, which sometimes goes undetected until it is serious. During a check-up, your healthcare provider will listen to your breathing and listen to your concerns.

It is best to catch a lung condition in its earliest stages. That is why it is important for you to know what some of the common signs and symptoms are for lung conditions (https://lung.org/lung-health-diseases/warning-signs-of-lung-disease).



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Do You Need Health Insurance?

If you need health insurance, learn more about your options.
(https://lung.org/policy-advocacy/healthcare-lung-disease/healthcare-policy/healthcare)

Exercise

Whether you are young or old, slender or large, able-bodied or living with a chronic illness or disability, being physically active can help keep your lungs healthy. Learn more about how exercise can strengthen your lungs. (https://lung.org/lung-health-diseases/wellness/

exercise-and-lung-health)



Public Health and Your Lungs

Health begins where we live, learn, work and play, and it's important to ensure that safeguards are in place to protect us and prevent disease.

SEE HOW PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUES CAN AFFECT LUNG HEALTH →

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