

Pursed-Lip Breathing for COPD*

What is pursed-lip breathing?

COPD can make it hard to breathe. You can feel short of breath. Pursed-lip breathing is a method that may make breathing easier. It may help you feel less short of breath.

How can pursed-lip breathing help me breathe?

Pursed-lip breathing helps you slow your breathing and use less energy to breathe.

How do I do pursed-lip breathing?

Follow these steps:

1. Concentrate on relaxing your shoulders and neck muscles.
2. Breathe in (*inhale*) slowly through your nose as you count to two, taking in a normal breath.
3. Purse your lips as if you are going to whistle or blow out a candle.
4. Breathe out (*exhale*) slowly through your lips as you count to four or more.
5. Repeat until your breathing slows.

Do not force air out. Do not hold your breath.

When can I use pursed-lip breathing?

Use pursed-lip breathing when you start to feel short of breath. For example, when you:

- Exercise
- Bend
- Lift things
- Climb stairs
- Feel anxious

You can practice pursed-lip breathing anytime. Try it a few times a day when:

- You are watching TV
- You are working on your computer
- You are reading a magazine or newspaper

Talk with your healthcare provider to learn more about when to use pursed-lip breathing. If shortness of breath continues or worsens, talk to your provider.

* COPD means chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.



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