

Achieve

A Newsletter
for AvMed
Members

▶ YOUR HEALTHIEST LIFE WITH COPD

4 ways to fight fatigue

While many people with COPD may feel tired, there are ways to combat it.

Symptoms of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) can deplete your physical and emotional energy — but they don't have to. Try these tips to help counteract fatigue.

Exercise regularly

People who exercise regularly report lower levels of fatigue than those who are more sedentary. What's more, exercise is associated with a longer life expectancy for those living with COPD.

Try to do a combination of cardiovascular and flexibility exercises. It's important to start slow. Activities such as



gardening and walking are good places to start.

Reduce stress

Reducing stress can decrease fatigue and anxiety and improve your overall quality of life. Find ways to alleviate pressure in your life, whether it's removing yourself from uncomfortable situations or turning to a support system of friends and family.

Drink plenty of fluids

Staying hydrated is important when you're

living with COPD. Some medications, as well as mouth breathing, can increase your fluid needs. Dehydration can cause a headache, fatigue, dry mouth, dizziness, rapid heart rate, and a host of other symptoms.

Spend time outdoors

Research has found that people feel better simply when they spend more time in nature. Go outdoors to situate your body to the time of day, move more, and diminish stress.



How should you handle a coughing attack?

When a cough won't stop, these steps can help you regain control and breathe easier.

For people with COPD, coughing is a familiar part of life. Yet, when a coughing spell becomes severe, it can feel scary and even lead to complications. Knowing how to handle these episodes safely can help you protect your health.

Focus on controlled breathing techniques

Slow, steady breaths can help reduce the urge to cough. Breathe in through

your nose, hold the breath for a few seconds, and exhale through pursed lips.

Stay hydrated

Staying hydrated keeps mucus in the lungs thinner, which may ease coughing spells. Sipping water can also soothe your throat. If dry air worsens your cough, consider using a humidifier to add moisture to the air.

Use your rescue inhaler If prescribed, use your rescue inhaler during

severe coughing spells. It can help open airways quickly. Be sure to follow your doctor's instructions on when and how to use it.

Change position to open airways A simple shift in position can make a big difference. Try leaning forward with your hands on your knees or standing up to open your airways. Avoid lying flat on your back, which can worsen coughs.

Ease anxiety

Coughing attacks can cause anxiety, which can worsen symptoms. Practice relaxation techniques like visualizing a calm place to ease tension and regain control over your breathing.

Know when to seek medical help

If a coughing spell is unusually severe or won't stop, it may be time to call for help. Call your doctor right away if you experience severe shortness of breath or chest pain.



To reach a Case Manager

Simply call 1-833-609-0735 or email DM@AvMed.org or scan the QR code provided.



Healthy Eating Made Simple



WHICH ARE HEALTHIEST?

Starchy vs. non-starchy vegetables

Vegetables are essential to a healthy diet. But knowing which veggies are “starchy” and which are “non-starchy” can help you make choices that support steady blood sugar levels. Here’s what to know about these types of veggies and how to incorporate them into balanced meals.

STARCHY VEGETABLES

While all vegetables have health benefits, starchy ones contain more carbohydrates. This may lead to a quicker rise in blood sugar. They’re still packed with nutrients, which makes them an important part of a balanced diet — just in smaller portions. Examples include:

- Potatoes and sweet potatoes
- Corn
- Beans and lentils
- Winter squash (like butternut and acorn)

NON-STARCHY VEGETABLES

Non-starchy vegetables are naturally lower in carbs, which makes them less likely to cause blood sugar spikes. They are often rich in vitamins, minerals, and fiber, which supports digestion and overall health. Examples include:

- Leafy greens (spinach, kale)
- Broccoli and cauliflower
- Bell peppers
- Summer squash (like zucchini)
- Mushrooms
- Asparagus

BALANCED EATING FOR BLOOD SUGAR CONTROL

Control portions: Limit starchy vegetables to one cup per meal. Use a measuring cup to help you stay on track.

Pair with protein: Eating starchy veggies with a protein, like chicken or tofu, helps keep blood sugar stable.

Listen to your body: Do certain veggies leave you feeling sluggish or energized?

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Recipe



Black beans and rice

Serves 16 | Prep time: 15 min

This classic dish is hearty, flavorful, and filling.

Ingredients

- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 medium yellow onion, diced
- 1 large green bell pepper, diced
- 4-5 aji cachucha, pierced
- 2-3 garlic cloves, minced
- 4 culantro leaves
- 4 bay leaves
- ½ Tbsp ground cumin
- 4-5 Tbsp prosecco wine vinegar or sweet white wine vinegar
- 4-5 Tbsp regular white vinegar
- 8 15-16 oz cans black beans (low sodium, undrained)
- Salt to taste

Instructions

- 1.** In a large Dutch oven or soup pot, heat the oil over a low to medium setting, then add all ingredients except the beans and water. Sauté until the onions soften and turn yellow (about 5 minutes).
- 2.** Add the undrained beans and water. If you like thicker beans, omit the water. Raise the heat and simmer (or boil) for 20 minutes. Add salt and adjust seasonings to taste.

Nutrition facts Calories 205
Fat 3 g | Carbs 35 g | Fiber 10.5 g
Protein 11 g