

Pulmonary Rehabilitation

What is Pulmonary Rehabilitation?

Pulmonary Rehabilitation is an exercise and education programme for people with long term lung conditions. It involves a combination of prescribed physical exercise and an education session with discussion and advice relating to your lung condition. The programme is designed to enable you to manage your shortness of breath more easily and have a better understanding of your lung condition.

The programme is run for six weeks and you will be required to attend twice a week for the six weeks. Each session is two hours and it is important that you attend all 12 sessions to make sure you get the most from attending the programme.

Why do I need Pulmonary Rehabilitation and what are the expected benefits?

Pulmonary Rehabilitation is aimed at people who have breathing difficulties which are affecting their daily life and causing a reduced ability to carry out daily tasks. At East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust we provide this service for people with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), Bronchiectasis and Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis (IPF). The common symptoms you may be experiencing as part of these lung conditions are:

- Increased shortness of breath
- Increased cough
- Increased sputum production
- Recurrent chest infections

Pulmonary Rehabilitation will:

- Help to improve your muscle strength so your body uses oxygen more efficiently and therefore reduces your shortness of breath during activities.
- Allow you to carry out more activities before getting short of breath and therefore be more active and independent.
- Have a better understanding of your lung condition so you feel more confident with managing your symptoms especially during flare ups or exacerbations.

Pulmonary rehabilitation does not change your lung condition, although it improves your global strength and makes your body more able to cope with your symptoms we do not expect to see a change in your spirometry as a result of attending Pulmonary Rehabilitation.

What does a typical Pulmonary Rehabilitation Programme involve?

Initially you will have been referred to the Regional East Sussex Pulmonary Service (RESPS) by your GP, respiratory consultant, practice nurse or another Health Care Professional. You will then be seen by a member of the RESPS team for an initial assessment, which will cover all aspects of your respiratory condition and check whether it is appropriate for you to attend Pulmonary Rehabilitation. You will then be invited to attend a further assessment during which you will complete a walking test to establish your baseline exercise level and some questionnaires, which allow us to review the improvements you make during the programme.

A typical Pulmonary Rehabilitation programme will have up to 18 patients attending and will be led by a Physiotherapist with a Respiratory Support Worker. At the start of each session you will have your oxygen levels, heart rate and breathlessness recorded; this will then be re-checked at intervals during the session.

The exercise section of the programme will consist of a group warm-up led by either the Physiotherapist or the Respiratory Support Worker. You will then be provided with your individual exercises, these will be a variety of leg, arm and cardiovascular exercises designed to increase muscle strength. You will be guided by the Physiotherapist what intensity to complete the exercises at, after all of the exercises are completed you will complete a cool down.

After the exercise session the physiotherapist and occasionally an outside speaker will lead on a discussion regarding your lung condition. The topics include:

- What to do when you are unwell and a self-management plan.
- The benefits of exercise.
- Anatomy and physiology of the lungs.
- Breathlessness management, relaxation and pacing techniques.
- Chest clearance techniques.
- Anxiety and panic attacks.
- Inhalers and medications.
- Welfare, rights and benefits.
- Nutrition and diet.
- Stopping smoking.

Where will Pulmonary Rehabilitation take place?

The RESPS team work within East Sussex and the programmes are held in a variety of community venues such as community hospitals, church halls, leisure centres and community centres. The main areas that we hold programmes are Eastbourne, Hastings, Hailsham, Bexhill, Seaford and Rye.

What will I need to bring to Pulmonary Rehabilitation?

You will be required to bring along your reliever inhaler if you have one, we will also advise you of any other medications we may need you to bring. We suggest that you bring a bottle of water with you as it is important to stay well hydrated whilst you are exercising. You will need to wear appropriate clothing to exercise in (such as loose fitting trousers and comfortable shoes, preferably trainers).

What will happen after Pulmonary Rehabilitation?

Following a session of exercise it is quite normal to experience some muscle ache and discomfort. We will closely monitor the effects of the exercise and it is important for you to inform us of any effects that you feel. As part of the programme you will be provided with a home exercise programme and we will ask you to complete three further sessions of exercise at home to gain the most benefit from attending the programme.

At the end of the six weeks you will be encouraged to continue exercising and we will advise you on how to do this. The benefits that you get from attending Pulmonary Rehabilitation will be short lived if you do not continue to exercise and the programme is designed to be a starting point to becoming more active and encourage lifestyle changes.

Patient Feedback

- 'I have enjoyed meeting others with the same lung condition and seeing the improvements I have made'
- 'I highly recommend this rehab, it was the most worthwhile thing I have ever done'
- 'Staff are very good, courses are really beneficial to participants'
- 'I would certainly recommend others to take advantage of attending a similar course'
- 'Come and learn what you don't know about COPD'

Who do I contact if I need more information?

Regional East Sussex Pulmonary Service (RESPS) 01424 758166

Sources of information

British lung foundation – www.blf.org.uk

BreatheEasy – British lung foundation support group – 03000 030 555 – breathe.easy@blf.org.uk

Regional East Sussex Pulmonary Service (RESPS) – 01424 758166

NHS Choices – Pulmonary rehabilitation video - <http://www.nhs.uk/Video/Pages/Pulmonaryrehabilitation.aspx>

Further information on pulmonary rehabilitation - <http://patient.info/doctor/pulmonary-rehabilitation>

Important information

This patient information is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the Patient Experience Team - Tel: (01323) 417400 Ext: 5860 or by email at: esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net

Hand hygiene

The trust is committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

Other formats

If you require any of the Trust leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department.

Tel: (01424) 755255 Email: esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

Reference

The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information:
Enter names and Job titles (at least one from each site if appropriate)

The Clinical Specialty/Unit that have agreed this patient information leaflet:
RESPS team.

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