

Pulmonary Rehab

What is pulmonary rehab?


Pulmonary rehab is a program for those who have a moderate-to-severe chronic lung disease such as:

- **COPD** (chronic obstructive lung disease)
- **Interstitial** [in-ter-STISH-uh] lung disease such as **sarcoidosis** [sahr-koi-DOH-sis] or **hypersensitivity** [hy-per-sen-si-TIV-i-tee] **pneumonitis** [noo-muh-NY-tis]
- Pulmonary hypertension [hy-per-TEN-shuh n]
- Asthma

A pulmonary rehabilitation (rehab) program helps you live better with lung disease. Rehab helps you have fewer symptoms and more energy. And, it helps you stay out of the hospital.



The pulmonary rehab program is run by doctors, nurses, respiratory therapists, and exercise physiologists. This rehab team will help you create a plan that fits your condition, needs, and goals.



What do I need to do next?

- 1 Learn how a pulmonary rehab program can help me. Read this page and [page 2](#).
- 2 Talk to my doctor about rehab and how to sign up for an initial evaluation. Use [page 3](#) to make notes.
- 3 Go to the initial evaluation. Take [page 4](#) with you to get started.

Your plan will include:

- **Exercise** training to make your body stronger and give you more energy
- **Education** about:
 - Your lung condition
 - What you can do to breathe easier
 - Support and counseling to help you deal with the difficulties that often come with lung disease

Potential benefits	Risks and potential complications	Alternatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ease shortness of breath • Improve your endurance and ability to exercise • Build or maintain your flexibility and strength • Lower your emotional stress • Ease anxiety and depression • Stay healthier and out of the hospital 	<p>Pulmonary rehab is designed to be safe, with therapists monitoring your comfort and symptoms. But as with any exercise, in rare cases pulmonary rehab can affect your health in unexpected ways. Pulmonary rehab brings a small risk of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abnormal heartbeat or blood pressure • Ineffective heart function • Chest pain • Heart attack or cardiac arrest <p>Tell the rehab staff right away if you have any symptoms. If you have a health emergency during a rehab session, our staff will be there to help you.</p>	<p>Alternatives can be different for each person.</p> <p>Talk to your doctor about the resources you need for education, support, and exercise.</p>

What happens at pulmonary rehab?

Each person's pulmonary rehab program is different. Yet, they all share these basic features:

- **Initial assessment.** The rehab staff examines your condition, needs, and lifestyle and checks your current physical abilities.
- **Individualized planning.** You and the rehab staff design a plan for how often to come to the rehab center and what easy-to-follow exercises to do at home. The plan can be changed as needed.
- **Ongoing communication.** Rehab staff shares your plans and progress with the healthcare provider who referred you to the program.
- **Classes and exercise sessions.** These sessions give you the skills, knowledge, and ability to improve your health and well being. They also give you a chance to share with other people who have lung disease and are also working to get better.



Education

Living better with lung disease requires specific knowledge and skills. Rehab classes focus on your lung disease and why actively following your treatment plan is key to reducing your symptoms. Classes also cover:

- **Breathing techniques** for easing shortness of breath, relaxing, and clearing your lungs.
- **Ways to reduce stress**, seek support, and cope with the challenges of chronic lung disease.
- **How to eat right and maintain a healthy weight** to increase energy and strengthen bones and muscles. Rehab staff can connect you with a dietitian if you have questions about what foods are best for you.
- **Tips and tricks for conserving energy.**
- **How to follow** an exercise plan at home.
- **Strategies for quitting smoking for good.** Connect with support groups and classes, so you aren't going it alone. Ask for a copy of Intermountain's booklet, ***Quitting Tobacco: Your Journey to Freedom.***



"Pulmonary rehabilitation gave me the skills, knowledge, and support I needed to feel better."

— Dwight M.



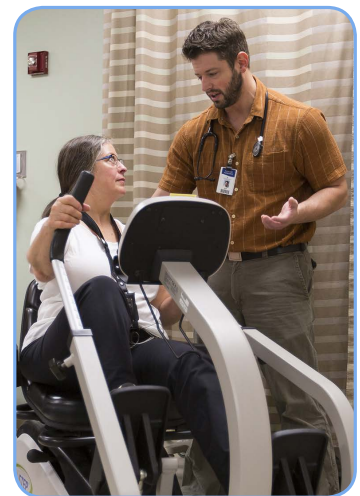
Exercise

Most people with lung disease need regular exercise. In pulmonary rehab, your exercise program is uniquely designed for you. It lets you start at your own pace and helps you gradually increase activity as you're able.

As you exercise at pulmonary rehab, the staff watches to make sure you're safe and keeps track of your progress. They keep track of your blood pressure, blood oxygen, weight, and exercise ability. You may also wear sticky patches (electrodes) on your chest that are connected to a monitor to check your heart rate and rhythm.

The exercise program has 5 parts:

- 1 **Warming up.** Rehab staff help you gradually warm up at the start of each session. This helps your body prepare for a workout and lessens the chance of problems during exercise.
- 2 **Endurance activity.** Also called aerobic exercise, this includes walking, cycling, or any activity that gets your heart pumping and your blood moving a little faster. This activity helps your body use oxygen more efficiently, which makes everything else you do during the day easier and less tiring.



3 Strength training. This isn't about body building or struggling with heavy barbells. Pulmonary rehab staff guide you in strength exercises that use little (or no) special equipment to build muscle strength and endurance. They will focus on strengthening chest and arm muscles to ease the strain on other muscles and help you breathe better.

4 Flexibility. Gentle stretches can improve your balance, make it easier to move, and reduce pain, stiffness, and stress. You'll learn stretches to help open up your chest and lungs for easier breathing.

5 Cooling down. Gradually slowing down can help keep your muscles from getting stiff after exercise.

Pulmonary rehab staff will also teach you exercises that use equipment easily purchased for use at home.



"I enjoy the fact that when I go to pulmonary rehab, I'm seeing people I know. We encourage each other."

— Sam S.

Tips for rehab program success

- **Prepare for each session.** Eat a healthy snack or light meal (such as toast with peanut butter or apple and cheese slices) about 1 hour before your session to make sure you have the energy you need.
- **(If you have diabetes) Check your blood sugar before you arrive.** Your glucose range for exercise should be 100 to 140mg/dL. It is still safe to exercise if your blood sugar is 300 or less.
- **Keep up with your home exercise program.** Regularly doing exercise at home in addition to your pulmonary rehab program will help you improve your heart and lung health.
- **Don't overdo.** Be patient with yourself. Remember that overdoing it can be a setback in your healing process. As you gradually increase your exercise duration and intensity, you will find you can handle more.
- **Stay positive.** Adjusting to a serious health problem often takes time. You may feel depressed or anxious, lose touch with your social support system, or have to stop working for several weeks. **Take it one day at a time, and don't give up.**

My first pulmonary rehab visit

My evaluation is scheduled on:

At this location:

I need to bring with me:

Page 4 of this fact sheet

Comfortable clothes

Walking or athletic shoes

Inhaler, if prescribed

Pulmonary Rehab: *Initial evaluation summary*

Bring this page with you to your first visit.

My pulmonary rehab exercise goals:

- 1 Increase the time I spend exercising:
Today's duration total: _____minutes Goal duration total: _____minutes
- 2 Be able to carry on a conversation as I exercise.
- 3 Reach my target heart rate (HR), which is measured in **beats per minute (bpm)**:
Today's HR range: _____bpm Goal HR range: _____bpm
- 4 Follow an established home exercise program (see below).
- 5 Build fitness slowly and consistently. Stop and rest if you have dizziness, severe shortness of breath, or chest pain.

My home exercise program:

Recommended activities for home exercise:*

*On days when it is very cold, hot, humid, or the air quality is poor, exercise indoors.

Increase exercise activities each week by: _____minutes

My resting HR today: _____bpm

My exercise HR today: _____bpm

My oxygen % range today was: _____% on _____L/min

Notes:

Remember, take it slow, but be consistent. Gradually build up your endurance. You may start with just a few minutes once or twice per day.

Your therapist will help you set appropriate goals and guidelines.

Try to exercise every day (or at least 5 days out of each week).

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