

Being active with a respiratory condition

Keeping active can actually reduce breathlessness, increase energy levels and reduce the chance of you getting a flare up of your breathing condition.

Here's how you can get started.

> **Blow as you go!**

Use this technique when you're doing activities which make you feel breathless. Breathe in before you make the effort, then breathe out during the effort.
For example: blow out as you step up etc.

> **Pace yourself!**

Use this technique to take control of your breathing during activity.
For example: breathe in for one step and out for two or three steps.

> **Make it social.** By asking a friend to get active with you, you'll keep each other motivated, and keeping active in a group is known to be more beneficial than doing it on your own.

> **If you have a respiratory condition** and haven't been to pulmonary rehabilitation, then ask your GP to refer you. These are tailored classes where you're supported to learn how to keep active.

> **Always make sure you have your inhaler.** Lots of people take their inhalers incorrectly and the medicine doesn't get to the lungs where it is needed, so before you embark on exercise, ask a respiratory health professional to check your inhaler technique.

> **People can fear getting wheezy** in cold weather and avoid going outdoors. Use a scarf wrapped round your face loosely to warm and moisten the air, thus reducing the chance of a wheeze.

> **Use the technique of pursed lip breathing** to control your breathing or when you're doing activity that makes you breathless. Breathe in gently through your nose, then purse your lips like you're blowing bubbles or a candle out and breathe out through your pursed lips.

> **Keep motivated.** Think about the activities you find hard now and what you'd like to be able to do to in the future. *Set yourself small goals and keep a record of them.*

> **Choose an exercise you enjoy!**

You're much more likely to stick at keeping active if you've picked something you love doing.

For more ideas and advice, visit: www.csp.org.uk/activity