Tips on achieving good lung health

If you take good care of your lungs, they can last a lifetime.

We often don’t consider the important role our lungs play in keeping us strong and well. Like the rest of our body, our lungs thrive on movement and activity.

Here are some tips that can help you achieve good lung health.

1. **Get you flu shot.** If you already have asthma or COPD the flu could make breathing harder and it could take you longer to recover. Our Nurses, Nurse Practitioner and Pharmacist will be running the 2017 flu clinic. Please continue to check the website for various dates, times, and location.
   - Be sure to visit the clinic and get your flu shot!

2. **If you smoke, get help in quitting.** Smoking is the major cause of serious lung diseases like lung cancer and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).
   - **From the moment you quit smoking, changes will occur!**
     - **Within 8 hours:** The level of carbon monoxide in your body will drop and the oxygen level in your blood will increase to normal.
     - **Within 48 hours:** Your sense of smell and taste will get better and your chance of having a heart attack will go down.
     - **Within 72 hours:** Your breathing will get easier and your lung capacity will increase.
     - **Within 2 weeks to 3 months:** Your circulation will improve and your lungs will function 30% better.

3. **Avoid second-hand smoke.** Don't allow smoking in your home, car or workplace.

4. **Wash your hands properly with regular soap and water.** It's estimated that hands spread 80 percent of common infectious respiratory diseases like colds and flu.

5. **Be aware of air pollution and do your part to keep the air clean.** Air pollution can irritate, inflame, or destroy lung tissue. Don't let your car engine idle and use public transit when possible.

6. **Protect yourself from lung health hazards at work.** If you spend a lot of time working around dust, asbestos, or chemicals wear protective clothing including a gas mask and ventilate work areas.

7. **Take your prescribed medication correctly.** It is important to take medication prescribed for your condition and if there are problems, follow up with your doctor or Nurse Practitioner or make an appointment to see our HRFHT Pharmacist.

8. **Mind your weight.** A healthy weight can improve your ability & comfort to breath. And it allows you to stay active, which is also beneficial for your breathing health.
9. **Get active.** The *Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines* suggest adults should aim for at least **150 minutes** of moderate- to vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity per week. It is also beneficial to add muscle and bone strengthening activities using major muscle groups, at least 2 days per week. Please follow up with your health care provider on how you can start being more active.

These tips are adapted from:

- [http://www.webmd.com/lung/copd/features/copd-breathing-tips#2](http://www.webmd.com/lung/copd/features/copd-breathing-tips#2)
- [https://www.on.lung.ca/inhalationdevicevideos](https://www.on.lung.ca/inhalationdevicevideos)
- [http://www.on.lung.ca](http://www.on.lung.ca)
- [https://myhealthcheckup.com/cvd/?lang=en](https://myhealthcheckup.com/cvd/?lang=en)