

Do You Struggle to Breathe Freely?

If you're suffering from lower respiratory disease, natural remedies can help to restore the health of your lungs

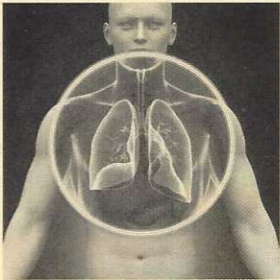


As you breath in your lungs fill with air and then empty as you breathe out. This process happens so automatically that most of the time you aren't even aware of it, but when lower respiratory disease makes breathing difficult, just taking a single breath can be a struggle.

About five percent of the population have problems that interfere with their ability to breathe. In fact, two of the leading causes of death in the US involve problems with the lungs. Chronic lower respiratory diseases are the fourth leading cause of death and pneumonia is the ninth leading cause of death.

Symptoms of lower respiratory disease include shortness of breath, chest pain and tightness, wheezing, chronic dry cough, and excessive mucus production. If you frequently have any of these symptoms, you should consult with a doctor to obtain a proper diagnosis. At the same time, be aware that although many medical treatments will ease symptoms they may do little to restore your lungs to a healthy state.

In this issue of *Sunshine Sharing* we'll teach you some of the things you can do to heal your lungs and breathe easier. We'll start by providing some basic information on how the lungs work and follow this with three basic suggestions for keeping your lungs healthy before covering various lower respiratory diseases and the natural remedies that can be helpful for them.



The Breath of Life

When you inhale, air enters your nose and/or mouth and travels down the throat to the trachea and then into the two bronchial passages that lead to the lungs. The bronchial passages are like the trunks of an upside-down tree with branches that divide into smaller and smaller tubes called bronchioles. These bronchioles end in tiny air sacks called alveoli. Each alveoli is surrounded by a blood capillary, allowing the exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide to take place.

The alveoli are elastic, like tiny air balloons. Their spongy texture allows them to expand and contract as the diaphragm and rib muscles alter the size of the chest cavity. As the diaphragm contracts downward and the chest expands outward, they inflate. As the diaphragm and chest muscles relax, the alveoli contract, pushing air out of the lungs.

Since the air you breathe can contain dust, pollen, bacteria, viruses, and other debris, the membranes lining the bronchioles secrete a thin, watery substance called mucus, which coats and protects them. Mucus traps irritants and cilia, tiny hair-like projections, sweep the mucus to the top of the trachea where it is swallowed into the esophagus.

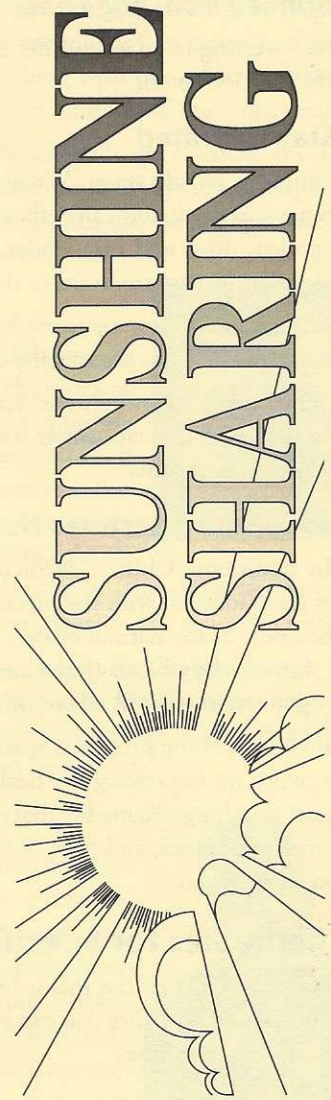
Basic Lung Care

While there are many diseases of the lungs, there are some basic things one can do to aid lung health no matter what disease a person has. Here are three ways to keep the lungs healthy.

1. Avoid Irritants

The most fundamental step to protect your lungs is to avoid inhaling substances that irritate and damage the lungs. One of the worst is tobacco smoke; so if you smoke the best thing you can do for your lungs is quit. Volatile chemicals such as paint fumes, artificial fragrances, and solvents are also damaging to the lungs. Avoid using these substances in confined spaces and use protective equipment to avoid inhaling them. If you live in an area with a lot of air pol-

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Your guide to better health the natural way.

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Important Notice

The information in *Sunshine Sharing* is for educational purposes only and should not be used to diagnose and treat diseases. If you have a health problem, we recommend you consult a competent health practitioner before embarking on any course of treatment.

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lution investing in an air purifier and/or houseplants can help to purify your indoor air.

2. Stay Hydrated

Mucus is mostly water. When you're dehydrated, the mucus becomes too thick and can't efficiently remove airborne irritants like pollen, dust, and pet dander. This allows these particles to cause inflammatory reactions in the lung passages.

Drinking enough water to stay hydrated will help thin the mucus allowing it to perform the vital job of clearing the lungs of irritants.

When drinking more water you may need to add a pinch of salt to help maintain electrolyte balance especially when trying to help flush out irritants.

3. Keep Your Intestines Healthy

In traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) the colon and the lungs are associated with the metal element, the defensive energy of the body. Many natural healers have discovered that constipation, intestinal dysbiosis (imbalances in the intestinal flora), and leaky gut syndrome will all contribute to respiratory problems.

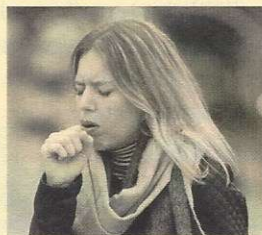
If you have lung problems and suffer from any digestive problems, work on improving the health of your digestive system to support your lungs. Remedies that may be helpful include digestive enzymes, probiotics, and fiber. It is often helpful to do a periodic colon cleanse, too.

Remedies for Specific Lung Problems

Here are some of the major lower respiratory problems and specific natural remedies that can be used in addition to the three basic suggestions above.

Chronic Cough

When mucus is not moving properly because it is too thick, or there is an excessive production of mucus trying to flush irritating particles from the lungs, the cough reflex helps to get this stuck mucus moving again. A cough is an involuntary, violent expulsion of air from the lungs in an attempt to expel the mucus trapped there.



In acute situations, where mucus is being coughed up, it simply means the lungs are doing their job. The cough is productive; irritants are being expelled. The best remedies to assist this process are warming decongestants (which thin mucus) and expectorants (which aid the movement of mucus). Helpful herbs include pine bark, wild cherry bark, horehound, horseradish, grindelia, and yerba santa. One of the best formulas for this type of cough is *Jeannie Burgess' Allergy-Lung Formula*, which contains horseradish and boneset.

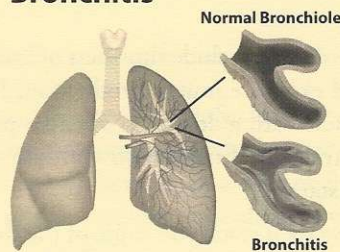
Chronic coughs are usually non-productive, meaning that the cough is dry and no mucus is expelled. In this case, there are irritants, but the mucus is too thick to move or there isn't enough of it to remove the irritants. In the case of these chronic, dry coughs, moistening expectorants and decongestants are indicated.

These should be taken with plenty of water (and perhaps a little salt). Helpful herbs for moistening the lungs and removing the stuck mucus include mullein, marshmallow, licorice, elecampane, plantain, and astragalus. A good formula in this situation is the *Chinese Metal-Increasing Formula*, which contains astragalus, aster root, and platycodon.

Unless the coughing is excessive and inhibiting sleep, it's better to help the body cough up the irritants than to suppress the cough reflex with cough suppressants (antitussives). However, if the lungs are hypersensitive and one needs to calm the cough reflex, some good herbs to use include lobelia, licorice, and coltsfoot flowers.

It may also be helpful do a steam treatment using essential oils like eucalyptus, pine, rosemary, or thyme. Bring a pan of water to a boil, remove it from the heat, add about ten drops of essential oils and breathe in the steam.

Bronchitis



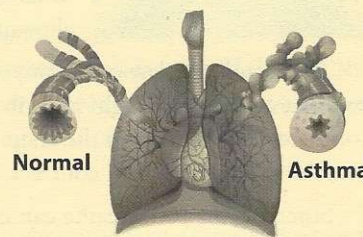
A chronic cough is often a sign of bronchitis, which is inflammation of the tubes of the lungs. The inflammation can be the result of irritants, allergic reactions, or infection. Inflammation involves swelling and this swelling constricts air flow,

making breathing more difficult. It may also cause more mucus production as the body tries to flush the irritation.

If the bronchitis is associated with infection then garlic, goldenseal, or echinacea may be helpful. Herbs that can reduce chronic irritation or allergic reaction include cordyceps, licorice, marshmallow, or osha. One of the best formulas providing multiple actions that ease the irritation, help fight the infection, and aid the cough reflex is the *Ayurvedic Bronchial Decongestant Formula*. Some of its key ingredients include licorice root, mullein, Indian elecampane root, and picrothiza root.

Asthma

Asthma is similar to bronchitis, in that it involves inflammation in the bronchial passages. However, in asthma, the problem is more chronic and severe and not due to infection. An asthmatic has reduced air flow due to swelling (and sometimes mucus congestion). Under stress an asthma attack may occur where the bronchial passages narrow so much that breathing is a struggle.



There are two primary ways to ease asthma symptoms. The first is to reduce the inflammation in the bronchial passages, which reduces the swelling. Medically, this is done with corticosteroid drugs, which may be administered orally or via an inhaler. Herbs and nutrients can also be used to reduce this inflammation. Cordyceps, licorice root, vitamin C, and turmeric or curcumin are helpful remedies.

Secondly, asthmatics may have a nervous system imbalance, especially during an asthma attack. The parasympathetic nervous system contracts muscles in the bronchi to reduce air flow, while

the sympathetic nervous system dilates the air passages to increase air flow. Asthmatics often have a deficiency in sympathetic activity that doesn't allow their air passages to properly open when there is a demand for more air.

This situation is addressed medically with inhalers that administer epinephrine, a sympathetic neurotransmitter. Herbal antispasmodics like lobelia, khella, and black cohosh can provide a similar action. Lobelia is particularly helpful. Take 5-10 drops of a lobelia extract with a little water every two or three minutes until normal breathing is restored.

The *Chinese Metal-Decreasing Formula*, which contains herbs like typhonium, bamboo sap, fritillary, and coltsfoot flowering tops, may be helpful for asthmatics. It can reduce inflammation, clear excessive mucus, if present, and help to dilate the respiratory passages.

If more than symptomatic relief is to be had, you need to identify the causes of the immune imbalance and lung irritation. Start by following the three basic suggestions for lung health. In particular, focus on gut health. Food allergies or intolerances are often an underlying problem in asthmatics. Try eliminating common food allergens, particularly dairy and gluten (wheat). Also avoid refined carbohydrates, refined sugar, high fructose corn syrup, and white flour.

The adrenal glands produce corticosteroidal hormones and epinephrine, the two substances used by the medical profession in relieving asthma symptoms. Asthmatics often have weakened adrenals and often benefit from taking an *Adrenal Glandular Formula* containing bovine adrenal tissue and nutrients that support the adrenal glands.

Many asthmatics also have a hiatal hernia, which inhibits free movement of the diaphragm. To learn more about this problem, read the article listed in the Additional Help and Information box.

Reactive Airway Disease

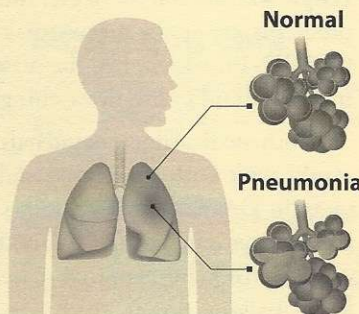
This is a problem similar to asthma. It occurs when the bronchial passages are hypersensitive to irritation. Breathing cold air, dust, or other minor irritants can trigger a dry, non-productive coughing, wheezing, difficulty breathing, a tight feeling in the chest, and shortness of breath.

If you have reactive airway disease, follow the same general principles as for asthma but pay particular attention to avoiding respiratory irritants and reducing irritation. Licorice root, cordyceps, and the *Ayurvedic Bronchial Formula* can be especially helpful.

Pneumonia

When the inflammation moves from the bronchial passages into the lungs, it can lead to pneumonia. In pneumonia, fluid accumulates in the lungs making breathing difficult.

Pneumonia is typically caused by a viral or a bacterial infection, so antiviral or antibacterial remedies like garlic, either raw or in a *Stabilized Allicin Formula*, and andrographis will help

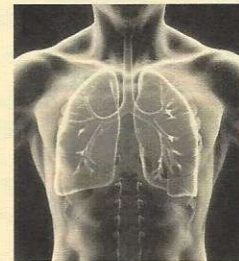


clear the infection. You also need to use expectorants to help clear the lungs of fluid. A good basic program is four capsules of *Jeannie Burgess' Allergy-Lung Formula* along with one tablet of *Stabilized Allicin Formula* every two to four hours until the lungs clear.

Also helpful for fighting the infection are essential oils. Inhaling essential oils like pine, eucalyptus, and thyme will help to ease congestion and fight infection. You can also use nanoparticle silver in a nebulizer to help fight the infection.

Pleurisy

Pleurisy is inflammation of the tissues that cover the lungs and line the thoracic cavity. Normally, the lungs glide smoothly over this surface as a person breathes in and out, but inflammation interferes with this process. As the lungs expand and contract they rub against the already irritated pleura, creating painful and difficult breathing. There may also be cough and collection of fluid or fibrous tissue in the thoracic cavity.



The herb pleurisy root is a specific for this problem. It helps reduce the inflammation and ease pain. Lobelia is also helpful for pain. Various moistening decongestants and expectorants (listed under chronic cough) may also be helpful.

COPD

COPD stands for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and is a blanket diagnosis for a group of a slow-developing disorders that cause chronic obstruction in the lungs. These include adult asthma, chronic bronchitis, and emphysema. Symptoms include cough with mucus, shortness of breath, fatigue, frequent respiratory infections, and wheezing.



Medical treatment for COPD is similar to treatment for asthma. Inhalers are often used to open respiratory passages. Corticosteroid drugs and antibiotics are also used during flare-ups, and oxygen therapy may be used in severe cases.

With COPD it is especially important to practice the three basic tips for lung health. Smoking is a primary cause of many cases of COPD and smokers will need to quit if they want to regain their lung health. It is also important to avoid air pollution and breathing very cold air.

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Additional Help and Information

For more information about lower respiratory diseases and natural remedies that can help contact the person who gave you this newsletter. You can also consult the following resources:

Strategies for Health by Steven Horne

Correcting a Hiatal Hernia <https://stevenhorne.com/article/Correcting-a-Hiatal-Hernia>

Natural Remedies for Emphysema and COPD by Robert J. Green, Jr., ND

Breathe Free: Nutritional and Herbal Care for Your Respiratory System by Daniel Gagnon and Amadea Morningstar

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Pay particular attention to intestinal health. Adopt a diet with plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables and reduce or eliminate consumption of common allergy-causing foods like dairy and wheat. It may also be helpful to take digestive enzymes and probiotics. People with COPD may also have a hiatal hernia, a problem previously referred to under asthma.

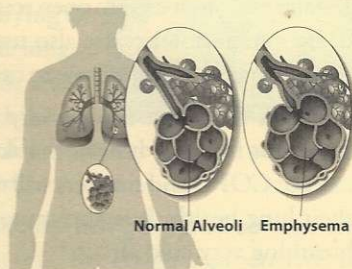
There are several categories of herbal remedies that may be helpful with COPD. Lung and respiratory tonics like astragalus, cordyceps, licorice, and mullein can be used to strengthen the lung tissue and improve respiratory function. The *Chinese Metal-Increasing Formula* is one of the better formulas for COPD. It helps strengthen the lungs and prevent respiratory infections. When breathing is difficult, herbs that dilate the bronchials like lobelia and khella can be helpful.

Emphysema

Emphysema is the most common form of COPD. It is a degenerative disease where the inflammatory processes in the alveoli of the lungs have gone on so long that the tissue starts breaking down. The alveoli lose their elasticity, which makes breathing extremely labored. Fluid also accumulates in the lung tissue due to the damage. Symptoms include labored breathing, wheezing, and a husky cough.

Smoking is the most common cause of emphysema, which is a serious condition that requires appropriate medical attention. However, natural remedies can be helpful, especially in helping to repair and rebuild the damaged lung tissue.

Start by following the suggestions for COPD, including adopting a healthy diet high in fresh fruits and vegetables. The diet should also be low in simple carbohydrates (flour and sugar), and free of chemical additives and preservatives.



Horsetail is helpful for restoring the elasticity of the lung tissue and helping to stop the leakage of fluid. It needs to be taken for at least six months, in a dose of about one capsule three times daily or two capsules twice daily. It will have a slow cumulative effect.

Mullein is good for moving fluid in the lungs and helping to soothe and heal damaged lung tissue. It also has a slow, cumulative effect and should be taken for at least six months. The dose is about six capsules per day. Slippery elm and marshmallow may also be helpful.

Astragalus and cordyceps are Chinese herbs that nourish the lungs and act as tonics to the lung tissue. Astragalus is the chief ingredient in the *Chinese Metal-Increasing Formula*. A good program is to take this traditional Chinese formula along with three or four capsules of cordyceps every day. Again, this should be done for at least six months.

Grindelia (or gum weed), plantain, and elecampane are helpful remedies for pulling fluid and mucus that is trapped deep in the lung tissue. They may help restore a productive cough, which can help clear irritants from the lungs that caused the damage.

COVID-19

COVID-19 is a new virus in the coronavirus family of viruses. Cold viruses are also coronaviruses. In most people, COVID-19 produces flu-like symptoms, and the recovery rate is above 99.9%. People who are elderly, obese, and suffer from other chronic health problems are at the greatest risk for serious complications from COVID-19, which, like the seasonal flu, can develop into pneumonia and other life-threatening health issues.

Both medical doctors and natural healers have reported positive results with both preventing and healing from COVID-19 with vitamin D3, zinc, and vitamin C. It helps to take the zinc with tonic water containing quinine to help the zinc absorb into the cells. Herbs being reported as helpful include astragalus, atractylodes, balloon flower, cordyceps, elderberry, mullein, salvia (red sage), and yarrow.