

LUNG HEALTH: BREATHING EASIER!

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He could not walk across the room without gasping for breath, even on supplemental oxygen, which he carried with him everywhere he went. I'll refer to him as Ted. Ted was a diabetic, a smoker with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and additionally he had suffered a massive heart attack that left him in disabling heart failure. The doctors sent Ted home on oxygen with little hope for recovery. I was asked to see Ted by his concerned friends. My approach was to assign lifestyle interventions for Ted designed to reverse and remedy his illnesses and limitations based on what we call the eight natural remedies; "Pure air, sunlight, abstemiousness, rest, exercise, proper diet, the use of water, trust in divine power—these are the true remedies."¹ In this article I want to share with you the basis for the advice I gave Ted and the results he experienced.

How important are your lungs? You eat two or three times a day, you drink water four or five times a day, but you breathe as many as 25,000 times a day.

Did you know this? "The power of God is manifested in the beating of the heart, in the action of the lungs, and in the living currents that circulate through the thousand different channels of the body. We are indebted to Him for every moment of existence, and for all the comforts of life. The powers and abilities that elevate man above the lower creation, are the endowment of the Creator."²

HOW IMPORTANT ARE YOUR LUNGS?

You eat two or three times a day, you drink water four or five times a day, but you breathe as

many as 25,000 times a day. Just try holding your breath for a minute or two and your body cries out for air. We like good food, we like clean water, but what about pure fresh vitalizing air?

Your lungs give you access to the atmosphere all around you. Without lungs you cannot obtain the oxygen every cell in your body needs. With your lungs, you interface with the outside world. The lungs are designed by God to provide a buffer of protection from harmful things in your environment. Your immune system is very active in your lungs for this purpose.

MORNING WALK

Walking in the fresh morning air is especially important. It is healthier to walk out in the country than in the city.³ Having one's window open at night is especially important.⁴ Keeping windows open during the day for fresh air is important.⁵ In 1918, when the Spanish Influenza was going around, much as coronavirus is going around these days, the patients who could not secure a hospital bed were accommodated with tents out on the hospital lawn. Guess who survived the 1918 Spanish Influenza the best? You guessed it, the people out in the fresh air. For more on prevent and treatment of viral lung diseases, such as coronavirus, see the chapter on pandemic prevention and treatment.

GASSING YOUR LUNGS

Avoid cooking indoors with gas⁶ or kerosene as this hastens lung demise.⁷ Even burning candles indoors negatively affects the lungs.⁸ Avoid all contact with mold/mildew as it increases lung diseases by 62%!⁹ Mold exposure in water-damaged buildings reduces natural killer cells, which fight diseases like the flu, and initiates lung-damaging inflammatory processes. Living in a home with mold (mildew)

problems increases the risk of respiratory symptoms and infections.¹⁰ I have literally felt my lungs burning when breathing air in a building infected with mold. Freedom from air pollution is important for lung health.¹¹ Houseplants can help reduce indoor air pollutants.¹²

FOOD FOR THE LUNGS

You are made up of what you eat. What you eat affects the health of your lungs. You may have heard it said, “An apple a day keeps the doctor away”. It may surprise you to learn that people following this advice actually breathe 138 milliliters more of air with every breath.¹³ What’s more, God has endowed apples with critical phytochemicals found to help the immune system of your lungs to fight infections caused by viruses.¹⁴ Other delicious foods that improve the immune system in your lungs include: grapes,¹⁵ onions,¹⁶ garlic,¹⁷ eggplant,¹⁸ and asparagus.¹⁹

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Pineapple is also helpful for the lungs because it is high in vitamin C, and it contains a very good phytochemical called bromelain. Bromelain is anti-inflammatory and helps break down fibrosis.^{20,21,22,23} In general, a diet of 80% fresh fruits and vegetables is very beneficial for lung patients.²⁴

Now, while there are foods beneficial for the lungs, others can be detrimental to lung oxygen exchange. It would be well to avoid free oils because they work against the lungs by lowering blood oxygen levels²⁵ and increasing inflammation.²⁶ What’s more, it takes more oxygen from the lungs to digest fats than to digest complex carbohydrates.²⁷ Oils are especially hazardous to lung function when used in frying because frying increases histamines in the food.²⁸ Histamines trigger asthma and other

lung disorders. For this and other reasons cheese is also especially bad for the lungs.²⁹ It is high fat, fermented, and it has histamines. An asthma patient of 15year duration called me one day, and while I did give them many of the pointers found in this article, the one that stuck out most in their mind was the advice to abstain from fermented dairy, especially cheese. In one week, abstinence from cheese (which had been a major part of their diet) had made all the difference in the world. In fact, within one day of stopping the consumption of cheese, their symptoms had markedly improved.

For those of you who are prone to reach for the saltshaker at every meal, be aware that a high salt intake reduces tissue oxygenation and increases inflammation thus compromising lung efficiency.^{30,31}

Fermented foods increase lung-compromising inflammation.³² You can look at our previous articles on fermented foods. Some examples of harmful fermented foods are coffee, chocolate, soy sauce, vanilla, brown rice syrup, cheese, wine, and vinegar.³³ Also, please see the chapter on autoimmune disease for inflammation issues.

NO SMOKING

Tobacco, in any form, is a top lung enemy.^{34,35,36,37} Smoking marijuana also poses a serious lung health risk.³⁸

People who are more active have better pulmonary function compared to sedentary people.³⁹ Sitting around all the time compromises your lungs. On the other hand, getting active improves your lungs.⁴⁰ An upright posture is also a benefit to improved lung function.⁴¹

LUNG EXERCISES

Walking is the best exercise. Frequent brisk walks throughout the day are more effective than one long walk.⁴² Helpful breathing exercises can be performed while walking. One must train themselves to breathe deeply and correctly. Shallow breathing results in toxins not being removed from the body through the

lungs.⁴³ People are more likely to breathe correctly, using their diaphragm as opposed to breathing with their shoulders while walking.⁴⁴ When you speak, it is very important to use your diaphragm and not your shoulders for support of your voice.

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I counsel people to count their steps (paces) and breathe in time with their steps. The process goes like this: walk while counting your steps as you inhale (breathe in). For example, maybe your first breath takes four steps (strides, paces) to complete. The exercise would go like this: inhale over those four steps, hold the breath for two steps and then exhale (breathe out) slowly for the next four steps. Repeat this process a few times and then try to increase the inhalation to cover five steps, and the exhalation to cover five steps. Repeat this a few times and then try to increase the number of steps over which a breath is taken in and then blown out. This is what singers do to expand lung function so they can hold out the long notes. This is what mountaineers, training to climb Mount Everest have done to improve lung capacity, in order to reduce the need to carry oxygen to high elevations. This exercise can be done every time a person walks.⁴⁵ The more beneficial times to walk are in the morning, first thing upon rising,^{46,47} and after each meal.⁴⁸ Better yet, for fastest results, walk every 1 to 2 hours during the waking hours. Walking in nature⁴⁹ improves lung function compared to walking in city streets.⁵⁰

DRESSING FOR LUNG HEALTH

Clothing is important. Clothing should not have any tight bands, especially around the chest⁵¹ or abdomen (bra's, belts, and waistbands). Clothing should be warm, especially of the arms and legs. If one is to exercise in cold weather, proper clothing is essential. Sufficiently protecting the arms and

legs from cold helps prevent inflammation and congestion of lungs and brain thus helping prevent lung influenza.^{52,53,54} Cold blood returning from cold arms that are not as well clothed as is the chest (trunk) inflames the lungs. Correct breathing is breathing from the diaphragm, not the shoulders.

IDEAL LUNG WEIGHT

Being overweight has a downside. Obesity (35+ lbs/16+kg over your ideal body weight) decreases tissue oxygenation, putting extra burden on the lungs.⁵⁵ Obesity is also a risk factor for obstructive apnea, a breathing disorder during sleep.⁵⁶

WATER AND YOUR LUNGS

Your lungs need good hydration. It is recommended to drink 3 quarts (liters) of water a day;^{57,58} one upon rising, taken warm with some fresh-squeezed lemon juice in it, one mid-morning, and one mid to late afternoon.

Direct sunlight on the chest is a good practice for people working up to a total of 20 to 30 minutes of sun exposure each day.

For some lung conditions and diseases, breathing water vapor from a boiling pot (steam) can be helpful. Breathing steam this way moistens the lungs, mobilizes secretions, and improves lung health⁵⁹ (always take care not to burn yourself).

Sunlight provides lung benefits.⁶⁰ Direct sunlight on the chest is a good practice for people; working up to a total of 20 to 30 minutes of sun exposure each day.

For lung health and total health, it is best to get 8 hours of sleep each night. It is also best to get it early in the night, starting around 9:00 pm.^{61,62} This improves your body's antioxidants and recovery from the day's activities.

Trust in divine power is a must. Pray for strength to change to a better lifestyle and claim

promises such as, “seeing He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;”⁶³

(Ted), the gentleman who was sent home on oxygen by his doctors, took my advice based on the above information – he took it as his last hope of life. He walked and breathed faithfully. He ate the best foods. He spent time outdoors. In 2 months time, Ted went from a man that was out of breath from walking across a room to a man walking one and a half miles a day. His diabetes and hypertension improved, and his doctors began taking him off medications and lowering his administered oxygen. His mind, darkened by illness, became clear and he enjoyed conversations and deep study of the Bible. The last time I saw a picture of him, he was on the cover of an advertisement for a program to improve people’s health.

Lungs can definitely be improved with a natural approach using the eight natural remedies. We have seen pulmonary cripples totally recover.

“The mechanism of the human body cannot be fully understood; it presents mysteries that baffle the most intelligent. It is not as the result

of a mechanism, which, once set in motion, continues its work, that the pulse beats and breath follows breath. In God we live and move and have our being. The beating heart, the throbbing pulse, every nerve and muscle in the living organism, is kept in order and activity by the power of an ever-present God.”⁶⁴

IF YOU WANT GOOD LUNG FUNCTION:

- Breathe fresh, clean, outdoor air as much as you can.
- Adjust your diet to support good lung function.
- Maintain a high level of physical activity outdoors in the fresh air and sunshine.
- Do breathing exercises that will help your lungs.

For further ideas on how to incorporate what you have just learned into your daily life, see the chapter entitled, “How Can I Apply Healthy Principles in My Daily Life”. Or Lifestyle Choices.

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