



Speaking from Experience Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

Transcript for chapter 5 of 11: Management – Staying healthy & active

Chris & Reg, 83: With COPD it's very important to have the good management because you can slow down the process. It isn't curable, COPD isn't curable, but it is treatable and it's manageable and those are the two words that you hang on to because that give you hope.

Roy, 53: I find that the exercises made a big difference. I've said to friends and I say to anybody that when I first started running, inclines were hills and hills were mountains. I recently ran the "City to Surf" there is no way I thought I could ever run that hill again. It's known as heartbreak hill, people from all over Australia have heard of that nasty little hill. It's something that I thought was not possible. I have not run the hill since I was 28; I'm now 53 and I did it.

Graham, 69: I've noticed that if you don't exercise for a week or so your capability of doing small things, might only be weeding the garden, etc. your physical fitness reduces. Whilst you're keeping yourself active and doing exercises on a regular basis, it becomes easier and you become stronger.

Chris & Reg, 83: He can't do what he used to be able to do but he'll do things slowly. Even when he gave up his building work he still did lots around our properties with building and he always enjoyed it and he just took his time over it, it just takes longer. It's very satisfying to be able to keep doing these things as long as possible because you have to keep active.

Colette, 45: Lungs are quite lazy little critters. If you stop exercising them they're more than happy to sit on the couch and get fat and lazy and not do their job at pushing oxygen around your body. Because of the disease, you build up mucus within the lung tissues and it won't move, you are then susceptible to pneumonia and colds and chest infections and the horrible coughing because your body's trying to expel it but it cannot. So exercise, I don't sound that pleasant when I'm in an RPM class because exercise shifts all that.

Julie, 58: What's basically happening through the exercise is you're getting all your body, all your other organs all your muscles, getting them stronger to support your lungs. Years ago they used to think anyone with lung disease should not do any exercise at all, you should just sit and die basically. Now it's totally the opposite, the more you do the better off, you know, within reason.

Colette, 45: You can have a really, really good diet, be a very healthy person but if you don't push your lungs a little bit each day, if you don't push your body a little bit each day then you're not going to be as efficient with your breathing. Your oxygen saturation is not going to be as efficient. So being so young and being so fit I have that advantage of managing my condition. And it gives me the ability to increase my fitness in the areas I need, as I mentioned earlier, in cardio particularly to keep my lungs healthy. It's not that important that I have a Miss Universe Physique in muscle tone but it is vitally important that my respiratory system is as healthy as I can make it.



Ruth, 72: Your wellness cycle does have a finite life there will be periods over the year where you will get sick, because it's natural, or there will be days where you don't feel well. And if you have, when you can still cook, things that you've done in bulk, well you'll have them in the freezer and you can pull them out and just put them on. So if you're cooking spaghetti sauce maybe you get 2kg of meat, cook the sauce and divide it into packets and put it in the fridge so that if there was a day in the week where you didn't feel all that well, you could just pull that out and there's not a lot of labor.

Colette, 45: We do have a very healthy diet. We have a very fresh fruit and vegetable, I make fresh vegetable soups in winter and I don't stop the things I love though either. We eat Indian at least once a week. I have a chardonnay at least 3 or 4 times a week and sometimes 2 or 3 chardonnays. I don't stop having a life; I simply moderate what we do and how we eat. From where I was, not that I've ever had a bad diet, that's not true, but I have been known to have a fairly high junk food diet at times and just go to the gym that little bit extra to make up for it but now I have a much... I'm a good 5 days a week.

Graham, 69: I've just reenrolled into a new fitness program through the lung foundation. I start in October and hopefully this will give me some insight into more exercise. Also being with a group of people makes it much easier to do exercise because it becomes a social things as well as an exercise thing. So you tend to do it, where as if you're on your own "oh I'll do it tomorrow, it's too cold today" or it's too hot and you just put it off. But if you're going to meet a group of guys or women to do these exercises it's motivation and it's great.

Colette, 45: Work builds up, family pressures build up you're still got to cook and clean and iron, and you've still got to do all the things that relate to life. You still want to go out and have friends, you still want to go out and do all these things and exercise goes you just exhaust yourself for an hour a day and then it's like nothing is insurmountable.