

Pulmonary Rehabilitation Toolkit

CHECKLIST

www.pulmonaryrehab.com.au

This summary card and checklist highlights the key features of a pulmonary rehabilitation program. Comprehensive, evidence-based information on how to establish a pulmonary rehabilitation program is available at the Pulmonary Rehabilitation Toolkit website: www.pulmonaryrehab.com.au

A pulmonary rehabilitation program should be considered for any patient who has underlying chronic lung disease and who is limited by dyspnoea.

Pulmonary rehabilitation programs require a health professional who has the expertise to conduct an exercise program and who is trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation. For the educational component of the program, a multidisciplinary team of health professionals may be involved.

Implementing the Program

STEP 1 | Patient assessment

- Obtain medical history**
- Assess smoking and nutritional status**
- Perform spirometry**
- Assess exercise capacity**
 - Six-Minute Walk Test
 - Perform two baseline 6MWTs with at least 30 minutes rest between tests.*
 - OR**
 - Incremental Shuttle Walk Test
 - Perform two baseline ISWTs with at least 30 minutes rest between tests.*
- Assess quality of life**
 - Chronic Respiratory Disease Questionnaire
 - OR**
 - St George's Respiratory Questionnaire
- Assess breathlessness**
 - Modified Medical Research Council Dyspnoea Scale
 - OR**
 - Modified Borg Dyspnoea Scale during exercise assessment
- Assess patient's goals**

Patients should be evaluated for contraindications and precautions to exercise. Supervisory staff should be aware of the criteria for termination of a test, and other important safety issues.

A primary goal of pulmonary rehabilitation is to reduce the patient's perception of shortness of breath.

Helping patients to identify their most salient 'problems' can help patients to establish achievable and motivating 'goals'.

STEP 2 | Patient exercise training

Design an exercise program

- Lower limb endurance (walking, cycling)
The following can also be included in a comprehensive program:
- Upper limb endurance (low weight, high repetition)
- Lower limb strength (high weight, low repetition)
- Upper limb strength (high weight, low repetition)
- Flexibility, stretching, balance

Determine appropriate exercise

- Intensity
- Duration
- Frequency

An improvement in exercise tolerance is one of the main benefits that can be obtained from a pulmonary rehabilitation program.

Lower limb endurance training is the most important component of the exercise training program.

Program length should be 6-8 weeks.

STEP 3 | Patient education

Conduct educational sessions on:

- The role and correct use of medications
- Breathing techniques / managing breathlessness
- Physical exercise
- Nutrition / healthy eating
- Information on diseases (e.g. what the lungs do)
- Coping with chronic lung disease and management of depression, anxiety and panic attacks

Through education, patients can become more skilled at collaborative self-management and more adherent to their treatment plan.

Education can be given in groups, individually or in the form of handouts.

Other educational topics may include:
Sputum clearance
Energy conservation techniques
Continence
Sexuality issues
Swallowing
Home oxygen
Community resources
legal issues and palliative care

STEP 4 | Program evaluation

Evaluate the effectiveness of the program on:

- Patient outcomes (exercise capacity, quality of life, breathlessness)
- Patient feedback (using a patient satisfaction questionnaire)

Communicate with patient's GP / physician

- Patient initial assessment
- Patient final assessment

STEP 5 | Maintenance

Continue to provide one supervised session a week for maintenance (if possible) or regular reassessment (every 6 months)

Encourage patients to undertake a home exercise program

- Start home training during supervised training program
- Encourage three home training sessions per week

Encourage the more able patients to join community exercise groups like "Lungs in Action".

Further information on setting up and implementing a pulmonary rehabilitation program is available at www.pulmonaryrehab.com.au.
For further information on available pulmonary rehabilitation programs call The Australian Lung Foundation at 1800 654 301.