

## Tips

If you smoke and decide to stop smoking: discuss this with someone you trust or seek professional support. Ask your treatment team what other help is available.

## Videos on coping with shortness of breath

There are various exercises and techniques that make it easier to cope with shortness of breath.

- «Four videos» may help you learn or perform the breathing techniques (climbing stairs while short of breath, breathing muscle exercises, managing shortness of breath and handling sudden breathless episodes).



## Shortness of breath (dyspnoea)

### Good to know



Shortness of breath is the feeling that you are not getting enough air into your lungs. It is often also described as constriction or a feeling of oppression. Shortness of breath can occur when you exert yourself or when you are at rest, sitting, standing or lying down. It usually has negative repercussions on physical activities, eating and sleep.

Shortness of breath can trigger anxiety or inner unrest and increase sensitivity to pain. Conversely, it is also possible that pain and anxiety may worsen shortness of breath.

Depending on the intensity of the symptoms, there are things you can do yourself to ease the shortness of breath or at least stop it getting worse.



## Shortness of breath (dyspnoea)

You feel...	Or you notice...	What you can do for yourself...
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mild breathlessness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Try to stay physically active (going for walks, sport according to your ability) and exercise regularly.</li> <li>Try to work out which situations cause you to become short of breath and take action to avoid them (see below).</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You experience the shortness of breath at night and/or during the day</li> <li>You get out of breath quickly when you exert yourself, for example when climbing stairs or even while walking normally on a flat surface</li> <li>You get out of breath even on mild exertion such as getting up, getting dressed, cleaning your teeth or showering</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask for respiratory physiotherapy to be arranged for you.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be aware of the positions in which you are able to breathe more easily.</li> <li>Do breathing exercises to improve your breathing capacity.</li> <li>Learn the correct technique for climbing stairs without getting short of breath</li> </ul> </li> <li>Use an electric fan and ventilate regularly. If you feel breathless, direct the fan straight towards your face.</li> <li>You can use relaxation exercises to ease your shortness of breath.</li> <li>Discuss with your doctor whether it might be helpful to use an inhaler and/or to take prescription medicines for shortness of breath.</li> <li>If you have already been prescribed reserve medicines for shortness of breath, do not be afraid to use them.</li> <li>Shortness of breath can severely affect both you and those around you. Talk to the treatment team if this is the case.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New episodes of breathlessness when at rest</li> <li>Sudden, severe breathlessness</li> <li>Rapid worsening of the symptoms listed in the yellow section</li> <li>You have a newly occurring cough, sputum or fever</li> <li>You have chest pains or you are coughing up blood</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact the treatment team.</li> </ul>