

CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is an obstruction of air flow to the lungs, decreasing their ability to take in oxygen and remove carbon dioxide. Chronic bronchitis and emphysema are the three major diseases comprising COPD.

Symptoms include chronic cough, shortness of breath, chest tightness, and increased effort to breathe. People with such chronic breathing difficulties are not cured but can be helped through a pulmonary rehabilitation program.

Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program

HSHS St. Mary's Hospital offers a 12-week personalized program designed to aid those suffering from COPD.

Goals of the program include:

- Reducing the number of hospitalizations
- Improving endurance during exercise
- Improving motivation and self-confidence
- Slowing the natural progression of the disease

Specially trained staff including a respiratory therapist and a registered nurse work in conjunction with your physician, helping you achieve the highest possible functional capacity and improve your quality of life.

Treatment

Treatment methods are tailored to your individual needs and include:

- Educational sessions about COPD coping mechanisms
- Exercise conditioning
- Bronchial hygiene techniques
- Nutritional evaluation by the hospital's dietitians as needed
- Respiratory muscle strengthening
- Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy evaluations if needed

Sessions

Pulmonary rehabilitation sessions are offered on a tri-weekly basis (Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays) in the cardiopulmonary rehabilitation exercise room on the fourth floor.

Admission/Cost

St. Mary's pulmonary rehabilitation program is open to any non-smoker with a documented diagnosis of restrictive pulmonary disease or COPD. A written physician's referral is required. The total cost of the program depends upon the number of services required. Generally, health insurance policies including Medicare will cover or partially cover services provided by the program. Contact your insurance company for more details.

Program Completion

St. Mary's pulmonary rehabilitation program offers ongoing assistance to help you maintain optimal pulmonary capacity and endurance, even after you've completed the program.

Contact Information

For more information, please call St. Mary's Pulmonary Function Laboratory at 464-2603 or Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation at 464-2056.



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