

Achieve

A Newsletter
for AvMed
Members

▶ YOUR HEALTHIEST LIFE WITH COPD

Coping with anxiety and breathlessness: Simple grounding techniques

Feeling short of breath can be scary — and anxiety can make it worse. These calming strategies can help you break the cycle.

When you're short of breath, it's easy to panic — and that anxiety can make your breathing feel even harder. But with a few quick grounding techniques, you can calm your nervous system and regain a sense of control.

Try these tips in the moment:

- **Name five things you can see.** Look around

and say them out loud.

- **Put your hand on your chest** and say, "I'm okay right now." Slow your breathing.
- **Touch something textured.** Focus on the feeling to shift your attention away from panic.
- **Use box breathing:** Inhale for 4 counts, hold for 4, exhale for 4, hold for 4.

Keep it simple and repeatable. You don't need a perfect meditation technique. Just find something that brings your attention back to the present and tells your body it's safe.

If anxiety keeps showing up, talk to your doctor or a mental health professional. Ongoing anxiety and breathlessness are treatable, and you deserve support for both.





What people with COPD need to know about other lung conditions

COPD can raise your risk for other lung diseases and make infections more serious. Here's how to stay ahead of complications.

If you have COPD, it's important to know how it may interact with other health conditions — especially those that affect your lungs.

You may be more vulnerable to:

- **Lung infections** like pneumonia, the flu, and COVID

- **Other chronic diseases** such as asthma, lung cancer, or pulmonary fibrosis

With COPD, your lungs are already under stress. A new infection or condition can make breathing much harder and take longer to recover from. In some cases, it can lead to hospitalization.

Luckily, these tips can help you protect yourself:

- **Stay up to date on vaccines**, including flu, COVID, pneumonia, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).
- **Avoid smoke and pollution**, which can make symptoms worse.
- **Practice good hygiene**, like frequent handwashing.
- **Report new symptoms early**, especially increased coughing, shortness of breath, or mucus.

Talk with your doctor about your personal risk and how to watch for early warning signs. The better you understand your lung health, the more prepared you'll be to manage it.



To reach a Case Manager

Simply call 1-833-609-0735 or email DM@AvMed.org or scan the QR code provided.



Healthy Eating Made Simple

THE FIBER FIX:

Why most people don't get enough and how to sneak more in

Fiber helps support heart, gut, and blood sugar health. These easy tips can help you close the gap without overhauling your whole diet.



Most people think of fiber as just a digestion aid, but it does much more behind the scenes to keep your body running smoothly. Fiber supports heart health, stabilizes blood sugar, and promotes a healthy gut by:

- **Lowering LDL (“bad”) cholesterol.**
- **Slowing digestion,** helping prevent blood sugar spikes.
- **Supporting regular bowel movements** and a healthy microbiome.

Still, most adults get less than half the recommended amount each day. According to Mayo Clinic,

- **Women need at least 21 to 25 grams per day**
- **Men need at least 30 to 38 grams per day**

Try these easy tips to sneak more fiber into your diet:

- **Add a veggie:** Toss spinach into scrambled eggs or top tacos with shredded cabbage.

- **Swap your carbs:** Choose whole-grain bread or brown rice over white versions.
- **Snack smart:** Try nuts, seeds, popcorn, or fruit with skin (like apples or pears).
- **Start slow and hydrate:** Increasing fiber too quickly can cause bloating — go gradual and drink plenty of water.

Even small changes can go a long way toward supporting your overall well-being.

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