

Sexual expression is an important part of life. If you have chronic lung disease you may experience shortness of breath and both partners may believe that abstinence is best. In fact the opposite is true. Intercourse is about as taxing as climbing stairs at a brisk pace. SOB during sex is acceptable if it can be tolerated.

Resuming intimate relations can decrease feelings of loneliness and alienation. Talking, openly with your partner can ease your fears. Intimacy involves communication and can be a very important part of your relationship.

Chronic lung disease doesn't diminish sexual ability, but it may be necessary to make some changes to compensate for decreased energy, lowered respiratory reserves, and shortness of breath during/after sexual intercourse.

Some medications used for depression or high blood pressure may interfere with sexual activity. Check with your doctor if this is a problem.

You may want to ease back into sex. You can allow several intimacy sessions if either of you are nervous. Sexual intercourse is only one form of the expression of love. Sexual feelings can be expressed through talking, holding, kissing, touching, embracing, stroking, and caressing. These are ways we tell people we love them and are just as important as sexual intercourse. These actions are all part of intimacy and can be satisfying without causing breathlessness.

Better Breathing During Sex:

1. Schedule sexual activity at your best time of day, when you are rested and relaxed. The key to good sex, as in any activity, is planning.
2. Use breathing control and take your bronchodilator just before intercourse.
3. If you use oxygen for activity, plan to use it during intercourse.
4. Allow partner to assume a more active role.
5. Try a position that reduces pressure on the chest or allows you to be less active - i.e. both standing, side lying or sitting in an armless chair.
6. If you get breathless, stop and relax. Talk to your partner and express your feelings by holding, touching and kissing. Increase the time spent in foreplay.
7. Make pleasure, affection and intimacy your goal, whether you reach orgasm or not.