



Respiratory Health

Monthly Newsletter | August 2016

Living with Respiratory Problems

Know the Signs and Symptoms

If you have had a cold or suffered from allergies, you know what it feels like to have trouble breathing. For those with respiratory diseases, breathing troubles can become a permanent, rather than temporary, problem.

If you have a respiratory disease, the right medical treatment — and learning how to manage your condition — can help you breathe easier.

How the Respiratory System Works

Your respiratory system is made up of your nose, sinuses, mouth, throat, voice box, windpipe, lungs, diaphragm, and blood vessels. Breathing is the process of inhaling and exhaling. When you inhale, you bring oxygen-rich air into your body. When you exhale, you release carbon dioxide into the air from your body.

You breathe about 25,000 times during a normal day. If you are healthy, this process is easy. But for those with chronic, or long-term, respiratory diseases, breathing is not that simple.



Symptoms

Because respiratory diseases affect your lungs, symptoms are related to how well you can breathe. In the early stages of respiratory disease, you might just feel tired. Other symptoms include:

- feeling short of breath, especially during physical activity or activities such as climbing stairs or carrying groceries
- feeling as though you cannot get enough air
- a cough that won't go away

- coughing up blood or mucus, making it hard for air to get in and out of the lungs
- uncomfortable or painful breathing
- a feeling of tightness in the chest
- wheezing, or a squeaky sound when you breathe

Your symptoms depend on your illness — how advanced it is — and your overall health. For instance, having another chronic illness or being overweight could make your symptoms a lot worse.

Diagnostic Tests

A doctor will identify the cause of your breathing problems based on your symptoms, medical history, and a checkup.

Blood gases test

Measures the oxygen and carbon dioxide in your blood.

Bronchoscopy

Allows your doctor to see your airways.

Chest x-ray

Captures images of your lungs.

CT scan of the chest

Performed if a mass or tumor is suspected or to look for fluid.

ECG or EKG

Checks to see if heart disease is causing your symptoms.

Pulmonary function tests

Measures how well your lungs take in and release air and how well they transfer oxygen into the blood.

Source: WomensHealth.gov

Recipe of the Month

Oatmeal Pecan Waffles

You'll jump right out of bed for this delicious meal!

All fresh berries may be substituted with frozen, thawed fruits. You can also use this recipe to make oatmeal pecan pancakes.

To make it more family friendly, have your children mix the batter and top each waffle/pancake with fruit.



Oatmeal Pecan Waffles

This main dish packs 9 grams of fiber and only has 340 calories and 11 grams of fat per serving. Recipe yields 4 servings.

Ingredients:

- 1 C whole-wheat flour
- 1/2 C quick-cooking oats
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1/4 C unsalted pecans, chopped
- 2 large eggs, separated
- 1 1/2 C fat-free (skim) milk
- 1 Tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 C fresh strawberries, halved
- 1 C fresh blackberries
- 1 C fresh blueberries
- 1 tsp powdered sugar

Preparation:

Preheat waffle iron. Combine flour, oats, baking powder, sugar, and pecans in a large bowl. Combine eggs yolks, milk, and vegetable oil in a separate bowl, and mix well. Add liquid mixture to the dry ingredients, and stir together. Do not overmix; mixture should be a bit lumpy. Whip egg whites to medium peaks. Gently fold egg whites into batter.

Pour batter into preheated waffle iron, and cook until the waffle iron light signals it's done or steam stops coming out of the iron. (A waffle is perfect when it is crisp and well-browned on the outside with a moist, light, airy and fluffy inside.)

Add fresh fruit and a light dusting of powdered sugar to each waffle, and serve.

Source: Healthyating.nhlbi.nih.gov