

# World Lung Day



The Forum of International Respiratory Societies (FIRS) has organised the first-ever World Lung Day on Sunday, 25 September 2022, for all those affected by respiratory diseases. The 2022 World Lung Day theme will focus on:

## Lung Health For All

- Increase knowledge of the impact of poor air quality on lung health and the actions that everyone can take to reduce air pollution and avoid exposure
- Highlight the benefits of quitting smoking
- Increase knowledge of the importance of physical activity for lung health
- Raise awareness of vaccination to prevent lung infections

## Healthy Lungs

When you have a breathing problem, you realise how important lung health is. Lungs provide oxygen and keep every other organ functioning by removing carbon dioxide from the body. Genetics, disease, and the environment can affect the health of the lungs and cause respiratory problems. When lung health is affected, it impacts the quality of everyday life and can prematurely shorten the lifespan.



## The Most Common Lung Diseases

Lung disease is any problem in the lungs that prevents the lungs from working properly. There are three main types of lung

### Airway diseases

The tubes (airways) that carry oxygen into and out of the lungs are affected by these diseases. Usually, they narrow or block the airways. Asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and bronchiectasis are some of the diseases of the airways. Often, people with airway diseases describe feeling as if they are "breathing out through a straw."



### Lung tissue disease

Lung tissue disease affects the lung's structure. Inflammation or scarring of the tissue prevents the lungs from growing. This makes it difficult for the lungs to take in oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide. People with this type of lung disorder often say they feel as if they are "wearing a too-tight sweater or vest." As a result, they can't breathe deeply. Pulmonary fibrosis and sarcoidosis are examples of lung tissue disease.



### Lung circulation diseases

These diseases affect the blood vessels in the lungs. They are caused by clotting, scarring, or inflammation of the blood vessels. They affect the ability of the lungs to take up oxygen and release carbon dioxide. These diseases may also affect heart function. An example of a lung circulation disease is pulmonary hypertension. People with these conditions often feel very short of breath when they exert themselves.



## Tips for Healthy Lungs

Follow these tips so you can improve your lung health and keep these vital organs going strong for life:

### Diaphragmatic breathing

Diaphragmatic breathing encourages full oxygen exchange — that is, the beneficial trade of incoming oxygen for outgoing carbon dioxide. This strengthens the diaphragm itself, which in turn strengthens the lungs.

### Simple deep breathing

Deep breathing can help you get closer to reaching your lungs' full capacity.

### Counting your breaths

You can also increase your lung capacity by increasing the length of your inhalations and exhalations. Start by counting how long a natural breath takes. If it takes to the count of five to inhale it should take to the count of five to exhale.

### Watching your posture

Since the lungs are soft structures, they only take up the room that you make for them.

A simple technique for giving your lungs even more room is leaning back slightly in a stable chair, lifting the chest, and opening the front of your body as you breathe deeply.



### Staying hydrated

Getting enough water is as important for the lungs as it is for the rest of the body. Drink 8-10 cups per day.

### Laughing

Laughing is a great exercise to work the abdominal muscles and increase lung capacity. It also clears out your lungs by forcing enough stale air out that it allows fresh air to enter more areas of the lungs.

### Staying active

Increasing your daily activity helps you to have healthy lungs, a healthier heart, and a better mood.

Aim for 30 minutes of consistent, moderately intense movement daily, like a brisk walk or bike ride.

### Say no to tobacco

Tobacco causes 8 million deaths each year and is the biggest cause of numerous lung infections. Tobacco smoke contains more than 4,000 chemicals, a great many of which are harmful and can cause cancer.

