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A simple tool to promote physical activity in patients with COPD

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Physical inactivity is a prominent feature in patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) compared to age matched healthy subjects or with any other people with chronic disease. Physical inactivity predicts poor outcomes in COPD and hastens the disease progression. Pulmonary rehabilitation has been endorsed as an effective non-pharmacological therapy to enhance exercise capacity and quality of life in patients with COPD, yet its effects on promotion of physical activity is unknown. Furthermore, the recent international guidelines on pulmonary rehabilitation emphasize on “long-term health enhancing behavior change” and increase in physical activity is considered to enhance positive health benefits in COPD. However, physical activity is perceived as a complex behavior difficult to reverse. We have explored the effects of ground walking prescription to promote physical activity in patients with COPD and observed significant improvements in physical activity and other outcomes of pulmonary rehabilitation.

Biography

Shakila Devi Perumal is a Pulmonary Rehabilitation Coordinator in St. Michaels Hospital, part of St. Vincent's Healthcare Group since 2007. She holds a Bachelor of Physiotherapy (Dr. MGR Medical University, India), M S Psychotherapy and Counseling (IPMS, India), Higher Diploma in Respiratory Physiotherapy from Trinity College of Dublin. She is an expert in pulmonary rehabilitation. Her main research interests include the rehabilitation of patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma and pulmonary fibrosis, with emphasis on physical activity and sleep. She has presented her research at national and international conferences. Recently, she was honored with a best poster award in the 2nd International Lung Workshop and it was endorsed by European Respiratory Society. She is an active member in Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapist and European Respiratory Society.

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