

GUIDE TO LIVING WITH

COPD

Healthmonitor®

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NURSE PRACTITIONERS™



**Find
your best
treatment**

- ✓ Facts you must know
- ✓ Questions you must ask

**44 TIPS
FOR
FEELING
GREAT!**

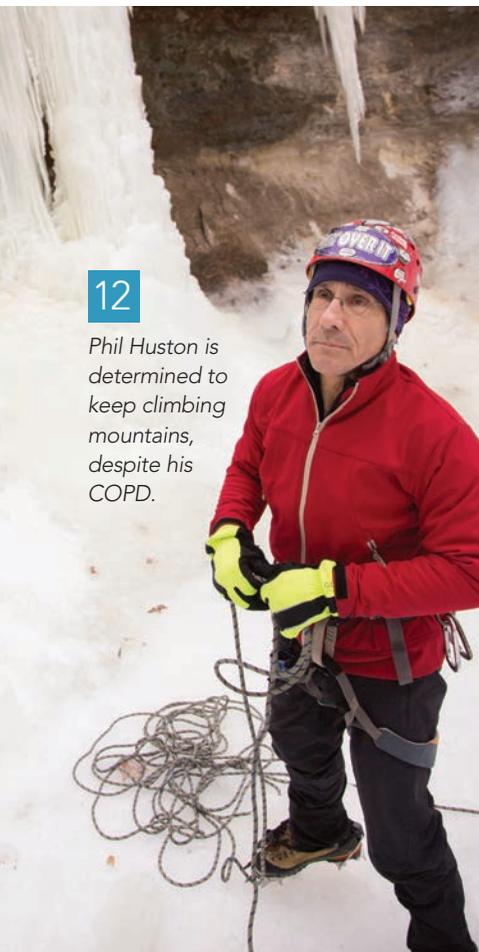
**"COPD can't
stop me from
climbing mountains"**

COMPLIMENTS OF YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER

Phil Huston has his breathing under control—and his heart set on scaling Mt. McKinley!

GUIDE TO LIVING WITH COPD

Special tear-out tool
for today's visit—fill out
and discuss with your
healthcare professional



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Phil Huston is determined to keep climbing mountains, despite his COPD.

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“COPD can’t stop me from *climbing mountains*”



How Phil Huston keeps his breathing under control while he does what he loves most—climbing, biking and skiing.

BY DEBORAH PIKE OLSEN

“COPD just has to deal with me, because I can’t stop doing what I love,” says Phil Huston, who was blindsided by the diagnosis in 2008. That includes climbing mountains (he’s scaled Mount Rainier 12 times and counting!), biking, skiing and kayaking.

That’s not to say the 63-year-old doesn’t find COPD a challenge. To rise above it, he works hard to stay fit and collaborates closely with his healthcare team. To control his breathing, Phil uses a long-acting steroid inhaler and a medication to keep his airways open daily. He also does breathing exercises, in which he takes a breath for four counts; holds it for four counts; and exhales slowly, then holds it for four counts. “It allows my lungs to take in more air,” says Phil. “It gives me energy and calms my breathing. The exercise trains my lungs, just like lifting weights strengthens my muscles.”

If Phil becomes short of breath, as he did recently while shoveling snow, he also tries to relax his chest, back and neck muscles. If he starts hyperventilating during a strenuous activity like a hike or bike ride, he inhales for four counts and exhales for eight counts, then repeats the exercise. “The training comes in handy, because I can stabilize my breathing wherever I am,” says Phil, who sells real estate in St.

Paul, MN, between active adventures.

Every morning, Phil stretches and meditates, which helps relax the muscles in his chest, back and neck. He also uses a percussive massager on his chest and back. “It gets the blood and oxygen in my chest flowing and relaxes my muscles,” he says. Nearly every day, Phil makes a point of participating in one aerobic activity—anything to challenge his breathing. He takes a spin class or rides a stationary bike at the gym, or he goes for a hike or bike ride outside. “It feels fantastic,” he says. “My endorphins get going, and I don’t feel like I have COPD at all.”

Eating healthfully—fish, chicken, salads—is also key. “If I gain a pound or two, I notice a difference in my breathing,” he says. “Gaining weight pushes my stomach up into my lungs,

making breathing more difficult.”

Phil’s efforts have paid off. “Six years ago, my doctor told me the COPD would progress, but it hasn’t,” he says. “Although the disease makes it difficult for me to breathe, I can still go out and sweat.” The proof? Last summer, he climbed 8,000 feet at Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado. “I was worried I would hyperventilate. But I took it easy and was fine. No one even knew I had COPD.”

What’s next? Phil’s eyeing Mount McKinley in Alaska—which peaks at 20,000 feet! Phil’s positive attitude may help him reach that goal. “I love my lungs,” he says. “And I think they are getting better. With COPD, you can push yourself beyond the pain and discomfort. You can achieve self-fulfillment.” 

Feel your best with your long-acting inhaler

Take your medication as your healthcare provider prescribes, and follow these tips for the best results:

- Use your long-acting inhaler at the same time so you don’t forget. Try taking it at the same time you brush your teeth or do another activity.
- If you’re not sure you’re using the inhaler correctly—or you think it’s not working—ask your healthcare provider to watch. He or she may help you improve your technique.
- Shake the inhaler for five seconds before using it.
- Store your inhaler upright, and keep it away from heat or an open flame.
- If you’re traveling, pack the inhaler in your carry-on bag, and keep a copy of your prescription with you.
- Ask your healthcare provider if you can use a spacer device with your inhaler to help the medication better reach your lungs.