

Clinical Benefits of Pulmonary rehabilitation in patients with COPD

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Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a condition characterized by progressive airflow limitation punctuated by exacerbations, associated with airway and systemic inflammation. Pulmonary rehabilitation program (PRP) is a process with scientifically based options to achieve the optimal daily functioning and quality of life of patients with COPD. PRP is recommended for patients with symptomatic COPD by the Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (GOLD) and in the American Thoracic Society–European Respiratory Society Statement. According to the GOLD consensus document on the management of COPD, PRPs should be considered in patients with an FEV1 below 80%.

The rationale for PRP is that a process of management is required to systematically apply all existing treatment options. PRP does not directly improve lung mechanics or gas exchange. It optimizes the function of other body systems. Many clinical trials have examined the benefits of PRP. Patients with COPD who participated in PRP often have substantial improvements in exercise capacity. The health-related quality of life also showed significant improvement. The level of exertional dyspnea was significantly decreased after PRP. Their respiratory muscle strengths also showed improvement after PRP. The goals of PRP in COPD patients are to reduce symptoms, improve activity and restore the highest level of independent function. PRP offers important benefits in patients with COPD.