

How can I help myself?

Know how to use your inhalers

Inhaler technique videos can be seen, along with lots of other information on the British Lung Foundation website:

<https://www.blf.org.uk/support-for-you/copd/health-care-professionals>

Stop smoking

The most important thing you can do is stop smoking. People who stop smoking get fewer flare ups and are able to do more for longer.

Have a flu jab and a pneumonia jab

To help reduce flare ups in the winter it is important to have a flu jab every October/ November. You should also have a one off pneumonia jab. You can get both at your GP practice.

Keep warm indoors and out

In the winter your living room should be 21°C and your bedroom 18°C.

Sleep with your windows closed and wrap up warmly indoors or out. Wear warm clothes to bed - several layers of thin clothing will trap the heat.

Keep cool in summer

In the summer stay out of the heat and keep cool. Drink plenty of fluids and exercise in the coolest part of the day.

Keep active

Although you may feel breathless when doing things it is very important to keep as active as possible. Ask your doctor or nurse about the importance of keeping active and pulmonary rehabilitation, which can really make a difference to you. For a copy of the free BLF 'Stay active, stay well' DVD, visit: <http://shop.blf.org.uk/collections/self-management/products/exercise-dvd>.

Annual review

Remember to book and attend your COPD annual review at your GP Practice

Set yourself some clear achievable goals. You could do this together with your health care professional. This is a format to help you:

My goal is

My plan to achieve this is

My timescale is

The challenges are

How can I overcome them

The people who can help me are

Useful telephone numbers:

British Lung Foundation - 03000 030 555A
helpline for people who are at risk from respiratory illness and number for local support groups.

Non-emergency NHS care - 111
24 hour health advice and information.

Winter fuel payments helpline - 0345 915 1515
For information on winter fuel payments.

Pension service - 0800 99 1234
Free benefits advice check to make sure you are receiving everything you are entitled to.

Age UK - 01226 776820 Free welfare rights service for older people, their relatives, carers and friends.

Yorkshire Smokefree - 0800 612 0011 (Free from landline) 0330 660 1166 (Free from mobile)



COPD Self management plan

COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) is a lung disease which causes the tubes that take air into your lungs to become narrow. People with COPD often become breathless when they are walking and may have times when they have 'flare ups' of their symptoms. Doctors and nurses call these flare ups 'exacerbations'.

Your doctor or nurse has given you this plan to help you to keep well and to help you know when your breathing is getting worse so that you can do something to stop the flare up being too bad.

Name: _____

Date plan issued: _____

The first person I call is: _____

Telephone number: _____

Services provided by:

Barnsley Clinical Commissioning Group
South West Yorkshire Partnership Trust
Barnsley Healthcare Federation
Barnsley Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
Barnsley Primary Care

When you are well:

Make sure you know

- How far you can walk before you are out of breath.
- How much sputum you produce daily.
- What colour your sputum is.
- How your breathing is at rest and when you are doing something.
- What makes your breathing worse - avoid triggers like cigarette smoke, but don't avoid activity when you are well as getting a bit breathless will help make you fitter.
- How well you sleep, including the number of pillows.
- How to use your inhalers, and what they are for.
- What to do if your symptoms get worse.

Lifestyle tips

- Stop smoking and avoid smoky areas.
- Keep active every day and ask your nurse or doctor about pulmonary rehabilitation.
- Ask your nurse or doctor for information about healthy eating.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Plan ahead and allow time to do things.
- Be sure to wrap up if it is cold outside.

Your reliever is:

Other inhalers:

Signs of becoming unwell:

- Increased breathlessness – not able to do as much as usual OR taking much longer to recover.
- Change in sputum colour from normal for you, to yellow, green or brown.
- Increase in the amount of sputum.

If you have two or more of the above signs of becoming unwell or have blood in your sputum:

- Continue your usual medication including your inhalers.
- Increase your reliever to:

You may require antibiotics and/or steroids. If you have a rescue pack please refer to your rescue pack flare up plan or speak to your COPD specialist nurse/GP Practice.

Other advice

- Allow more time for rest in the day.
- Drink extra fluids.
- Eat small amounts regularly.

Additional information specifically for you (for example if you have been given additional medication to keep at home):

Severe symptoms:

The following symptoms need urgent medical attention:

- Too breathless to speak in sentences.
- Feel drowsy
- Not able to eat or drink.
- You have a high fever.
- Coughing up blood or blood in sputum.
- Your symptoms get worse after starting your rescue medication OR you are no better after two days of taking your rescue medication.

Contact your GP immediately for an urgent review.

This includes out of hours as they will redirect you.

If you are short of breath at rest, feeling agitated, afraid or drowsy you need to sit down and try to stay calm. Panicking will make your breathing worse.

Call 999 if you experience any of the following:

- Confusion
- Severe central chest pain
- Feel exceptionally drowsy
- Symptoms come on rapidly
- Blue lips, fingers or toes

Take puffs of _____

Use a large volume spacer if you have one while you are waiting for an ambulance.