COPD Rescue Pack Patient Information Leaflet

What is my COPD Rescue Pack?

Your COPD Rescue Pack contains a supply of standby medications to start if your COPD gets worse before you are able to see your GP.

The COPD Rescue Pack contains two different medications:

Steroid tablet	Prednisolone 5mg tablets x 40
Antibiotic capsule	Amoxicillin 500mg capsules x 15 **or** Doxycycline 100mg capsules x 6

Please read this leaflet and keep it with your rescue pack medications.

When should I take my COPD Rescue Pack?

Only start your rescue pack medication if you are having a flare-up of your COPD. See page 2 for more information.

You should have a COPD management plan explaining the steps you should take in the event of a flare-up (exacerbation) of your COPD. If you do not have a current management plan, contact your GP.

Use the traffic light system on the following page to help guide you

If you are still not better after finishing your COPD rescue pack, contact your GP.

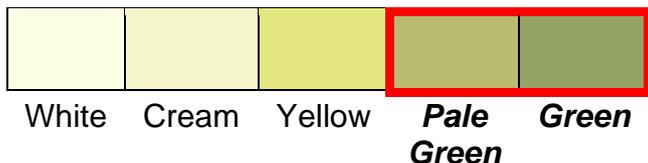| GREEN – When you are well	
Signs	What to do?
If I can do my usual activities without feeling more breathless I have my usual amount of cough I have my usual amount of sputum/phlegm My sputum/phlegm is the usual colour	☑ Continue taking daily medications ☑ Continue being active ☑ Avoid cigarette smoke and any triggers ☑ Ensure you go to your annual COPD review

AMBER – Worsening symptoms	
Signs	What to do?
If I have TWO of the following symptoms I feel more breathless or breathe faster doing my usual activities I feel wheezy/tightness in my chest I feel extremely tired and have less energy	☑ Continue taking daily medications ☑ Rest and keep indoors ☑ Use a fan to help with breathlessness ☑ Check the expiry date on your rescue pack. Request a new supply from your GP surgery if it is out of date ☑ Increase your reliever inhaler (salbutamol or terbutaline) use

If you continue to have these symptoms for over 24 hours despite using more of your reliever inhaler, start your steroid tablet:

Steroid (Prednisolone 5mg) tablets - *Take EIGHT tablets immediately and then take eight tablets again as a single dose each morning, with food, for a total of five days.*

If I have TWO of the above symptoms AND I am coughing more sputum (phlegm) than usual OR My sputum (phlegm) is darker than **usual** White Cream Yellow *Pale Green* *Green*	☑ Start steroids as above ☑ Start your antibiotics: **Amoxicillin 500mg capsules –** *Take ONE capsule THREE times a day, for a total of five days.* OR **Doxycycline 100mg capsules** – *Take TWO capsules straight away and then ONE capsule, starting the next day, for a total of five days.* If you take calcium or iron tablets, do not take them within 2 hours of your doxycycline capsules

Let your GP know when you start your rescue pack and ask for a resupply

RED – Severe symptoms	
Signs	What to do?
If you develop any emergency symptoms, even after starting rescue pack, such as: Severe breathlessness Chest pain High fever or temperature Feeling of agitation or fear Drowsiness or confusion	☑ Get urgent GP appointment or ☑ Phone 111 ☑ In an emergency dial **999** and ask for an ambulance

COPD flare-up summary

Do I feel worse than usual?

If I get:

| more out of breath | more out of breath despite taking my reliever medicines | more phlegm, change in colour: dark yellow, green | more chesty coughing |

I will:

| use my reliever inhaler more | start my rescue pack - steroids | start my rescue pack - steroids and antibiotics | keep calm and use ways to control my breathing |

I will remember:

to tell my doctor or nurse

that if I feel really bad, I must call 999

If I use my rescue pack, I will tell my doctor or nurse so they can keep track of my flare-ups and I can get my medicines replaced.

Asthma and Lung UK (2022). COPD – Managing COPD flare-ups. Available online: https://www.blf.org.uk/support-for-you/copd/flare-ups [Accessed 10 Jan 2023]

What should I do if I've forgotten to take a dose of my steroid or antibiotic?

It is important to take medication as prescribed. However, if you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember and then carry on taking your next dose at its regular time. If you realise you have missed a dose but it is almost time for your next dose, **do not take a double dose**, skip the dose you have missed, take the next dose at its regular time and then carry on as normal with any remaining doses.

Are there any side effects?

All medications may cause side effects. With short courses such as your COPD Rescue Pack, most people don't have any problems. The patient information leaflets supplied with each medication within your rescue pack list the more common side effects for each medication. If you are concerned about any side effects please contact your GP or Community Pharmacist for further information.

If it is out of hours, phone NHS 111.

What else should I do?

If you start your rescue pack, you must contact your GP surgery to inform them that you are less well and have started the rescue pack. Make a record of this in the final page of this information leaflet and continue with your usual medication.

Ask for a resupply of your rescue pack after you have used it and remember to check the expiry dates regularly. If your rescue pack is out of date, take it back to your local community pharmacy for safe disposal.

If you go to the hospital, please take all your medications and this leaflet with you.

Pulmonary Rehabilitation

This is a twice weekly exercise and education programme to improve your fitness and help you to self-manage your condition. Please ask your health care professional, GP or practice nurse to refer you to the service for assessment. If it is over a year since you last completed Pulmonary Rehabilitation, you are eligible to repeat it if your breathlessness prevents you from doing your usual activities.

myCOPD App

myCOPD App is a digital self-management tool for people with COPD.

The app is full of useful information and advice on managing the condition including:

- inhaler technique videos
- education from experts
- a six-week pulmonary rehabilitation program
- prescription assessment
- self-management plan
- symptom and assessment tracking
- weather and air pollution forecasting

You can sign up to the app at your GP surgery or by scanning the QR code above. It's easy to use and can be downloaded onto any device with internet access, such as a smart phone, tablet or computer.

Useful contacts and support groups

Breathe Easy support group
For patients, carers and families to provide support, friendship and information **www.blf.org.uk/breatheeasy**

British Lung Foundation (helpline)
www.blf.org.uk or 03000 030 555

NHS Choices
You can get more information about COPD on the NHS Choices website: **www.nhs.uk/copd**

Stop Smoking Service
- The Freephone Smokefree National Helpline: 0300 1231044 **www.nhs.uk/smokefree**
- Find your local pharmacy who offer support: **www.bnssgccg.nhs.uk/smoking** or 0117 900 2655 / 0800 073 0907
- The Smoke Free app is a four-week program of practical support. If you stay smoke free for 28 days, you are 5 times more likely to quit for good.

Rescue Pack Record

Use the table below to keep a record of how many times you have used a COPD rescue pack and details of your flare-up. This will help healthcare professionals understand how often you are requiring treatment for your flare ups and how effective your current treatment plan is.

Date flare-up began	Date steroid started	Date antibiotic started	Date I saw my nurse or GP	How long did the flare-up last?

Extra notes (e.g. did I need to go to hospital?)