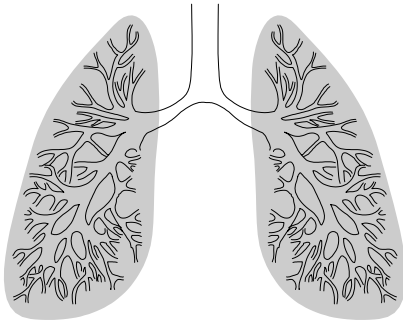


# COPD

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease  
Chronic Bronchitis & Emphysema



## COPD – What is it?

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease is also known as chronic bronchitis and/or emphysema. It affects your lungs causing shortness of breath, cough, wheeze and lung infections. It is caused by damage to your lungs, almost always caused by smoking. The more you smoke and the longer you smoke the more you are at risk. You may also have increased risk of COPD due to industrial pollution, such as coal mining.

## What symptoms can I expect?

Symptoms may develop gradually. You are likely to get breathless especially after exercise. Your smoker's cough may get worse and you may feel wheezy with a tight feeling in your chest. Your cough may produce more phlegm, which becomes coloured or dirty. If you develop a chest infection your cough and breathlessness will get worse, and you may develop sharp pains in your chest, especially when you breathe deeply.

## What can I expect in the longer term?

You are likely to need to take inhalers or tablets on a regular basis to help your symptoms. You should be seeing your doctor or the practice nurse for a routine check at least once a year. During this consultation nurse will review your symptoms and your inhalers & tablets. She is also likely to test how much puff you have with a machine called a spirometer. This allows us to measure how severe your COPD is and how effectively your medication is working.

## What if it gets worse?

Depending on just how bad your symptoms are, and how quickly they

change, you may need to take antibiotics for a chest infection, higher doses of your inhalers or tablets, you may have to use a nebuliser or start taking oxygen most of the day. If you get very sick you will need to go into hospital to have the drugs given directly into your veins via a drip.

## How can I help myself?

There is only one way to stop COPD getting worse and that is to stop smoking. It is never too late to stop smoking, even if you already have COPD, because it will stop your condition getting worse as quickly. We can help you stop, with advice, support, and nicotine replacement treatment (patches) so just ask. You should try to avoid passive smoking and other forms of air pollution. If your partner smokes why not give up together? You should get your flu jab each year and your pneumonia jab, which is only given once. If you think you are developing a chest infection, you need to see your GP promptly and get treatment if necessary.

## Exercise

If, when I exercise, I get breathless, why should I exercise?

Because when you exercise, within your limits, on a regular basis, you will gradually feel better and be able to do more without getting breathless.

Physiotherapists recommend a planned schedule of exercises for you to do, on your own at home. The exercises are gentle and get slightly harder at each level. If you are able to exercise daily on a regular basis you should be able to move up a level each week.

The idea is to get into a routine of doing your exercises at the same time each day. You are advised to time yourself to see how long it takes you to do your exercises each day & how many steps you climbed or how far you walked, and to record this in your exercise diary.

It is important to pace yourself during your exercising. You are likely to get a little out of breath when exercising but this is normal and with practice your breathing will improve until you can do your exercise without being breathless. If you are able to complete all stages of the exercise schedule then a really big "Well done!"

Keep up the good work and continue to exercise for 15-20 minutes a day regularly.

Exercises:

Option 1. Climb the number of steps and keep going for the time in each exercise stage and record how many times you climbed up and down.

Option 2. Walk up and down your hall or living room for the time stated, taking a rest for one minute halfway, and record the number of times you walked up and down.

Option 1

Stage 1: 5 steps for 2 minutes

Stage 2: 5 steps for 3 minutes

Stage 3: 5 steps for 4 minutes

Stage 4: 5 steps for 5 minutes

Stage 5: 10 steps for 5 minutes

Stage 6: 10 steps for 6 minutes

Stage 7: 10 steps for 8 minutes

Stage 8: 10 steps for 10 minutes

Option 2

Stage 1: walk 4 minutes with rest

Stage 2: walk 6 minutes with rest

Stage 3: walk 8 minutes with rest

Stage 4: walk 10 minutes with rest

Stage 5: walk 12 minutes with rest

Stage 6: walk 15 minutes with rest

Stage 7: walk 18 minutes with rest

Stage 8: walk 20 minutes with rest

Caution:

Take care on stairs, use the handrail, come down the stairs backwards, and don't be tempted to over do it.

Discuss your plans with your doctor, nurse or physiotherapist.

COPD Exercise Diary								
		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Option 1 - Number of repetitions of steps climbed								
Stage 1	5 steps for 2 minutes							
Stage 2	5 steps for 3 minutes							
Stage 3	5 steps for 4 minutes							
Stage 4	5 steps for 5 minutes							
Stage 5	10 steps for 5 minutes							
Stage 6	10 steps for 6 minutes							
Stage 7	10 steps for 8 minutes							
Stage 8	10 steps for 10 minutes							
Option 2 - Number of repetitions of walking laps of hall or living room								
Stage 1	Walk 4 minutes with rest							
Stage 2	Walk 6 minutes with rest							
Stage 3	Walk 8 minutes with rest							
Stage 4	Walk 10 minutes with rest							
Stage 5	Walk 12 minutes with rest							
Stage 6	Walk 15 minutes with rest							
Stage 7	Walk 18 minutes with rest							
Stage 8	Walk 20 minutes with rest							