Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

COPD Self Management Plan

Version number: **2**
Last modified date: **12th November 2026**

COPD Self-Management Plan

Patient Information

Community Respiratory Team

- Author ID: Respiratory Service
- Leaflet Ref: CM 270
- Version: 2
- Leaflet title: COPD Self-Management Plan
- Last review: June 2023
- Expiry Date: June 2025

Name: .....

Date of Birth: .....

NHS Number: .....

Date: .....

Issued by: .....

Signature: .....

Respiratory Medications

Inhaler/Medication	Dose/Frequency

My usual symptoms

My sputum colour is: .....

My sputum amount is ..... daily.

Cough?	Yes	No
Wheeze?	Yes	No
Chest tightness?	Yes	No
Smoker?	Yes	No

I can usually walk, ……. metres before getting breathless.

My COPD may be getting worse if I have any of the following symptoms:

- I feel more breathless than usual
- My sputum has changed colour
- I have more sputum
- I have a new or increased cough

- I am finding my normal daily activities more difficult or taking longer
- I have new or increased ankle swelling

What actions should I take?

- I should increase my reliever medication
- I should drink plenty of fluids
- I should monitor my symptoms

If your symptoms improve within 2 days, continue your usual medication and regime.

However, if they are no better or getting worse, continue with your increased dose of reliever medication

What to do if I have and exacerbation?

I am having an exacerbation if I have two or more of the following symptoms:

- I am much more breathless than usual
- I have an increased amount of sputum
- I have a change in colour of my sputum
- I have a decreased appetite
- I have the feeling of being generally unwell
- I have a raised temperature/fever
- My inhalers/ medication are not helping.

My actions:

- Continue my usual medication
- Use increased reliever therapy
- Keep hydrated
- Start my rescue medication (antibiotics and/or steroids)
- Practice breathing techniques and relaxation
- Inform GP/nurse

Day to day management/ keeping well

- I take my inhalers/medication as prescribed
- I plan each day carefully
- I eat a balanced diet
- I eat small regular meals
- I exercise regularly
- I drink plenty of fluids
- I use my breathing techniques
- I use my relaxation techniques
- I make time for things I enjoy
- I receive my annual flu vaccine
- I receive my pneumonia vaccine as appropriate

Routine GP

- When? If you feel your COPD is worse but no change in the amount or stickiness or colour of your sputum and no improvement within 48 hours. make an appointment to see your GP

- **Action**. Take sputum sample to your GP - do not start antibiotics until you have seen your GP.

Urgent GP

- **When?** If you feel your COPD is worse but no change in the amount or stickiness or colour of your sputum and no improvement within 48 hours. make an appointment to see your GP

- **Action**. Take sputum sample to your GP - do not start antibiotics until you have seen your GP.

Urgent GP

- **When?** All chest infections where you feel unwell with coughing up more sputum and worsening colour to your sputum or worsening breathlessness OR

- If coughing up blood OR

- If chest pain breathing in

- Action. Collect sputum sample and then start the antibiotics recommended immediately without waiting for the sputum result.

Emergency GP or 999

- **When?** You are confused or drowsy OR
- Coughing up large amounts of blood OR
- Severely breathlessness or breathless whilst talking
- **Action**. Call the emergency GP first
- Collect sputum sample if feasible and then start the antibiotics recommended immediately without waiting for the sputum result.

Local Pharmacy

Your local pharmacies offer a wide range of services including information and general advice on symptom relief medicines as well as a prescription collection and delivery service.



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