



## 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 <b>or</b> 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?
<b>If</b> 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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue taking daily medications <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue being active <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Avoid cigarette smoke and any triggers <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ensure you go to your annual COPD review

## AMBER – Worsening symptoms

Signs	What to do?
<b>If I have TWO of the following symptoms</b> 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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue taking daily medications <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rest and keep indoors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use a fan to help with breathlessness <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Check the expiry date on your rescue pack. Request a new supply from your GP surgery if it is out of date <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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.*

<b>If I have TWO of the above symptoms AND</b> I am coughing more sputum (phlegm) than usual <b>OR</b>  My sputum (phlegm) is darker than <b>usual</b>   <div>             White   Cream   Yellow   <b>Pale Green</b>   <b>Green</b> </div>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Start steroids as above <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Start your antibiotics:  <b>Amoxicillin 500mg capsules</b> – Take <i>ONE capsule THREE times a day, for a total of five days.</i>  <b>OR</b> <b>Doxycycline 100mg capsules</b> – Take <i>TWO capsules straight away and then ONE capsule, starting the next day, for a total of five days.</i>  If you take calcium or iron tablets, do not take them within 2 hours of your doxycycline capsules
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**Let your GP know when you start your rescue pack and ask for a resupply**

## RED – Severe symptoms

Signs	What to do?
<b>If you develop any emergency symptoms, even after starting rescue pack, such as:</b> Severe breathlessness Chest pain High fever or temperature Feeling of agitation or fear Drowsiness or confusion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Get urgent GP appointment or <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Phone 111  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> In an emergency dial <b>999</b> 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.

## 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.



## Useful contacts and support groups

**British Lung Foundation** (helpline)  
[www.blf.org.uk](http://www.blf.org.uk) or 03000 030 555

### Stop Smoking Service

- The Freephone Smokefree National Helpline: 0300 1231044  
[www.nhs.uk/smokefree](http://www.nhs.uk/smokefree)
- 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?)