**Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) - Rescue Pack Information**

**Please read this leaflet and keep it with your COPD rescue medicines**

**What is a COPD rescue pack?**

Your COPD rescue pack contains medicines to take if your COPD gets worse before you are able to see your GP.

Your COPD rescue pack contains two different types of medicines:

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| Steroid tablets | Prednisolone 5mg tablets x [42 if local policy is 7 days supply or x 84 if local policy is 14 days supply] |
| Antibiotic tablets | Clarithromycin 500mg tablets x 10 |

**Amoxicillin is a type of penicillin, if you are allergic to penicillin or amoxicillin, do not take this medicine. Speak to your pharmacist, GP or COPD nurse who will be able to supply you with a COPD rescue pack containing a different antibiotic).**

**When should I start taking the medicines in my COPD rescue pack?**

You should only take the medicines in your COPD rescue pack if you have a flare-up of your COPD. You should have a management plan explaining the steps to take in the event of a flare-up of your COPD. If you do not have one, contact your GP or COPD nurse.

You should make a note of the expiry dates of the medicines contained in your COPD rescue pack and ensure you request another supply from your pharmacist, GP or COPD nurse if your medicines go out of date.

The medicines in the rescue pack should only be used for flare-ups of your COPD. They should not be used for any other medical condition or be used by another person.

**Signs that you might be having a flare up of COPD**

Your COPD might be getting worse if you start to experience any of the following:

* Increased breathlessness which interferes with your daily activities;
* New or increased wheeze and/or chest tightness;
* A change in the quantity or colour of sputum (phlegm) you are producing;
* A new cough or increased coughing.

If you have any of these symptoms, increase your reliever (blue) inhaler, rest and stay indoors. If you have two or more symptoms for over 24 hours, despite using your reliever (blue) inhaler, start taking your COPD rescue pack.

**How do I take my COPD rescue pack medicines?**

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| **Prednisolone 5mg tablets** | Take SIX tablets as a single dose immediately and then SIX tablets EACH day, in the MORNING, with food, until the course is complete. |
| If the sputum (phlegm) you are producing **changes colour**, especially if it is becoming green or yellow you should also start taking your antibiotic capsules (Amoxicillin): | |
| **Clarithromycin 500mg tablets** | Take ONE tablet TWICE a day, until the course is complete. |

**It is extremely important you once you start taking the steroid and antibiotic you finish taking the pack of medicine(s) even if you start to feel better.**

**What should I do if I forget to take a dose?**

It is important to take your COPD rescue pack medicines as stated above. If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember and then take your next dose at the regular time. However, if you realise you have missed a dose but are about to take your next dose, do not take the dose you missed, take the next dose at the regular time and carry on as normal with the remaining doses.

**Do my COPD rescue pack medicines have side effects?**

Your COPD rescue pack medicines have patient information leaflets included in the boxes. These list the side effects and other precautions for both medicines. Please read these leaflets and if you have and questions or concerns please contact your pharmacist, GP or COPD nurse for further information.

**What else should I do?**

If you start to take the medicines in your COPD rescue pack, you must contact your GP or COPD nurse to inform them that you are having a flare up (exacerbation) and have started to take your COPD rescue pack medicines.

Once you have recovered from your flare up (exacerbation) visit your pharmacy to request a replacement COPD rescue pack and make an appointment with your GP or COPD nurse for a review.

**Emergency symptoms**

If you experience any of the following symptoms, even after starting taking your COPD rescue pack medicines, contact your GP practice/[Other services may be available but this is dependent on what is available locally] **immediately:**

* Severe breathlessness
* Chest pain
* Inability to complete sentences
* High fever or temperature
* Symptoms coming on very quickly
* New (or worsening of existing) swelling of the legs

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| **In an emergency dial 999 and ask for an ambulance.** |

If you need to go to hospital, please remember to take all your medicines with you.

**Useful contact numbers**

[This section can be amended depending on what services are available locally]

**Your COPD nurse:**

**Your GP:**

**NHS 111:** Call **111** for free to speak to a highly trained advisor, supported by healthcare professionals. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

**British Lung Foundation helpline**: 03000 030 555