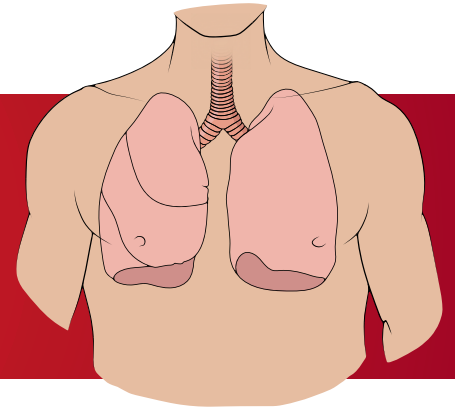


Action Plan for Staying Healthy at Home With COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease)



This handout is a quick guide to staying healthy and safe at home. Follow these tips and all instructions from your hospital care team to help you avoid another hospital stay.

Take Your Medicines

Some special guidelines to note:

- You are likely taking a few medicines to manage your COPD. These may include steroids, daily inhalers, fast acting rescue inhalers and antibiotics.
- If you are unsure about how to take your medicines or you cannot afford them, please tell your doctor or nurse.

Go to Your Follow-Up Visits

It is **very** important to go to your follow-up visits with your primary care doctor or lung doctor (pulmonologist). Your doctor needs to see you at follow-up visits to check on your progress and make sure your medicines are working. They need to see you within 1 week of your hospital stay and then at least once a month for 3 months.

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Ways to Stay Well

- Avoid triggers. Work with your doctor to figure out what makes your COPD symptoms worse. Once you know what they are, do your best to avoid them.
- If you are on oxygen, use it as ordered by your doctor.
- Eat a healthy diet based on advice from your care team.
- Help prevent infection by washing your hands often and using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water isn't available.
- Exercise – it helps strengthen your heart and lungs and gives you more energy. Before starting any exercise program, ask your doctor if it's safe to do so.
- Get a yearly flu shot.
- If need help quitting smoking:
 - Call the Ohio Quit Line at **1-800-QUIT-NOW** or visit **smokefree.gov**
 - Find out if your insurance covers our UH Tobacco Treatment Counseling program. If so, you will need a doctor's order to use this service. To learn more about our program, call **216-896-1810**.
- Avoid alcohol.

Hang this on your refrigerator to remind you of reasons to call your doctor or 9-1-1



GOOD TO GO

Follow the tips in this handout to help you to stay healthy and out of the hospital. Always monitor your health and be aware of the signs of new or worsening health concerns. Read below to learn when and who to call for help.



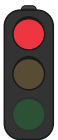
CAUTION

Call your doctor's office right away if you have any of the problems listed below. Your doctor may need to adjust your medicine doses and/or order blood tests/ X-rays. Keep taking your medicines as ordered until you see your doctor.

- Sputum (phlegm) increases, changes color or thickens
- Cough increases or wheezing, even after taking your medicines
- More trouble breathing - use pursed lip breathing if you feel breathless
- More coughing with activity
- Medicines are not helping
- Appetite not very good
- Need extra pillows to sleep
- Any other symptom that causes concern

My doctor's name: _____

Office phone number: _____



STOP

Call 9-1-1 right away if you have any of these problems:

- Trouble breathing or wheezing at rest – hard to walk or talk
- Rescue medicine isn't working
- Chest pain or tightness that does not go away
- Must sit up to breathe
- Lips or fingernails turn blue or gray
- Feeling confused or anxious (worried)

*If it's hard to breathe, use pursed lip breathing while you wait for help.