

# We're here to help

Call our helpline on **03000 030 555**

Our friendly staff can tell you more about your COPD. They are here to answer your questions. If your first language is not English, we can find someone to talk in your language.

Call us Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm. Your call will never cost more than a local call. A call is usually free, even from a mobile, depending on your call provider.

## Find out more about COPD

Visit our website [blf.org.uk/COPD](http://blf.org.uk/COPD) to see:

- > [what having COPD means](#)
- > [its symptoms](#)
- > [its drugs](#)
- > [COPD flare-ups](#)
- > [how to control your breathing](#)
- > [how to exercise](#)
- > [how to eat well](#)
- > [help to stop smoking](#)

You can also get information from [blf.org.uk/publications](http://blf.org.uk/publications)

## More ways to help you

There are over 230 local Breathe Easy support groups across the UK. We can help you to find your local group. We also have a web community, visit [blf.org.uk/web-community](http://blf.org.uk/web-community)



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We value feedback on all our information. To let us know your views, and for the most up-to-date version of this information and references, call the helpline or visit [blf.org.uk](http://blf.org.uk)

Registered charity in England and Wales (326730), Scotland (038415) and the Isle of Man (1177)

This resource has been developed by the London Respiratory Network (LRN) in partnership with the BLF. Other free LRN resources are available here: [www.networks.nhs.uk/nhs-networks/london-lungs](http://www.networks.nhs.uk/nhs-networks/london-lungs)



# Managing your COPD flare-ups

- A flare-up (or exacerbation) is when your COPD symptoms get temporarily worse
- Each flare-up has an effect on your health
- It is important to know how to recognise the symptoms
- Treating them quickly will prevent you from getting too ill

**Name**

**Date of birth**

**GP/nurse telephone number**

**Other useful telephone numbers**

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My symptoms	Plan of action
My symptoms are normal for me	I will continue to take my usual medication as prescribed.
I am more breathless than normal but I have no fever, and there is no change in the colour and volume of my phlegm.	I will use my reliever medication. This is: ..... .....
I am much more breathless despite taking my reliever medication.	I will continue to use my medication as prescribed and I will also use my rescue pack. <b>Steroid:</b> ..... I will tell my GP or health care professional within two days of starting this treatment, and arrange a review as soon as I can.
I am more breathless than normal and coughing up more phlegm, or my phlegm has changed colour.  I am much more breathless despite taking my reliever medication.	I will continue to use my medication as prescribed and I will also use my rescue pack. <b>Steroid:</b> ..... <b>Antibiotic:</b> ..... I will tell my GP or health care professional within two days of starting this treatment, and arrange a review as soon as I can.
My breathing is much worse than normal despite treatment.  I have chest pain or high fever.	I will call my GP the same day, as soon as my symptoms become this bad. If I can't call myself, I will ask someone to call for me.  <b>If I cannot wait to see my doctor, I will call 999 straight away. If I am too breathless, I will ask someone to call for me.</b>

## Do I feel worse than usual?

Symptoms may include:



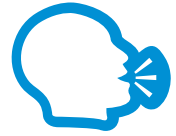
Getting more out of breath



Getting more out of breath despite taking my reliever medication



Increased phlegm.  
Change in colour: dark yellow, green



Increased chesty cough



Continue or increase my inhaler or nebuliser treatment



Start my rescue pack drugs (steroids)



Start my rescue pack drugs (steroids and antibiotics)



Keep calm and do my breathing exercises

## I must remember...

Contact my nurse or doctor or the community respiratory team



If symptoms are severe, call 999



### Remember

If you use your rescue pack drugs, tell your doctor or nurse as soon as you can.