

About me

(tick all that apply)

- ☐ I am a known CO₂ retainer
- ☐ I have an Advance Care Plan
- ☐ Long-term home oxygen and flow rate: L/min

Remember

- Keep your action plan up to date
- Make sure your inhalers aren't empty or expired
- Take your medications as prescribed
- Regularly check your inhaler technique with your healthcare practitioner

Tips for managing your breathlessness

Scan this QR code for a guide on managing your breathlessness.



My breathlessness plan



1. Stop what you are doing



2. Find a resting position



3. Use your fan, or the breeze



4. Begin your preferred breathing technique for 2-3 minutes

If you are still feeling breathless, follow your **Action Plan** on the next page.

Using a spacer

If you use a metered dose inhaler (MDI), a spacer will help get the correct dose of medication into your lungs.

Ask your healthcare professional about a spacer; they can provide them free of charge. If you don't already have one, you need one. Spacers increase your medication's effectiveness.



1. Shake the inhaler well (holding it upright).
2. Fit the inhaler into the opening at the end of the spacer.
3. Seal lips firmly around the mouth piece, press the inhaler once only.
4. Take 4-6 slow breaths in and out through your mouth. Do not remove the spacer from your mouth between breaths.
OR take one slow deep breath in and hold this for 10 seconds.
5. Repeat steps 1-4 for further doses.



Washing your spacer

Wash your spacer once a week with warm water and dishwashing liquid.

Do not rinse, drip dry to ensure that your medicine gets into your lungs and doesn't stick to the sides of the spacer.



cardiacandrespiratory.org.nz



COPD

(Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease)

Action Plan

This COPD Action Plan belongs to:

Name _____

Healthcare practitioner _____

Date of plan _____

Healthcare practice phone _____

Know your COPD symptoms...

Know when and how to take your medicine...

NORMAL FOR ME

When I am well my 'normal' is:

- I have a usual amount of cough/sputum
- I can do my usual activities
- I can walk metres/km
- Oxygen saturations % breathing room air

puffs every morning

puffs every night

puffs every morning

puffs every night

Reliever:

puffs when you need it to relieve your symptoms

I'M UNWELL

These signs suggest my COPD is worse:

- I am more breathless
- I need my reliever medicine more often
- I am more tired/fatigued
- I am losing my appetite
- I may have a fever (hot/cold flushes, temperature)
- I may have more sputum

What should I do?

- Breathing control techniques - scan QR code on back page
- Rest more
- Sputum clearance
- Take reliever inhaler regularly (for example every 4 hours)
- Make an appointment to see my Primary Health Care team within 3 days

Start

Prednisone:

 mg for

 days

If I have all of the following symptoms it is a sign of a chest infection:

- There is an increase in the amount of sputum
- My sputum has changed to a darker colour
- I am more breathless than usual

Start antibiotics for signs of a chest infection:

 times per day for

 days

I'M VERY UNWELL

I am becoming more unwell if:

- I am getting worse despite the extra medicines

OR

- I am no better 48 hours after taking prednisone

What should I do?

- Breathing control techniques - scan QR code on back page
- Rest more
- Sputum clearance
- Phone my Primary Health Care team to make an urgent appointment today or go to After Hours Medical Centre

Important: See a healthcare practitioner today

Other instructions:

EMERGENCY

I'm extremely unwell

- I am very breathless
- I am not getting any relief from my reliever medicine
- I am scared
- I may be unusually confused or drowsy
- I may have chest pain

What should I do?

- **Dial 111 for ambulance** or press your medical alarm button
- Take extra reliever as needed until the ambulance arrives
- Breathing control techniques

Plan prepared by _____

Next review date _____

Signature _____