
A Guide to Managing Your COPD

PREVENT Program



Preventing Readmissions and Emergency Room Visits in Elgin through Novel Transitions

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is a chronic disease of the lungs that is characterized by inflammation, irritation and narrowing of the airways resulting in breathlessness. It can affect every part of your life. Climbing stairs, preparing a meal, or taking a walk. This condensed guide will provide useful tips and tricks on managing your COPD and help you maintain a healthy lifestyle for years to come.

Introduction

The PREVENT program is a novel systems-based approach that aims to not only improve upon the system level factors that contribute to health utilization but to also improve the education and delivery of medical care for those affected with COPD.

“More than 750,000 Canadians have COPD.”

In this program, the care delivered to you through Home and Community Care, your family physician or nurse practitioner’s office, in-patient medical physician and staff, and outpatient Specialists, will be COORDINATED and communicated with you.

You will learn strategies to stay healthy and safe at home as well as an enhanced awareness of when you might need a little extra care and attention and need to seek emergent treatment.

This guide is a first step toward learning to manage your disease. Share this guide with your family, friends, and caregivers. Please bring this guide and your PREVENT binder to all your appointments with your family physician or nurse practitioner.

THIS GUIDE CAN HELP YOU LEARN TO:

- PREVENT AND SLOW THE PROGRESSION OF YOUR COPD
- HELP RELIEVE YOUR SYMPTOMS
- IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH AND BETTER MANAGE YOUR COPD

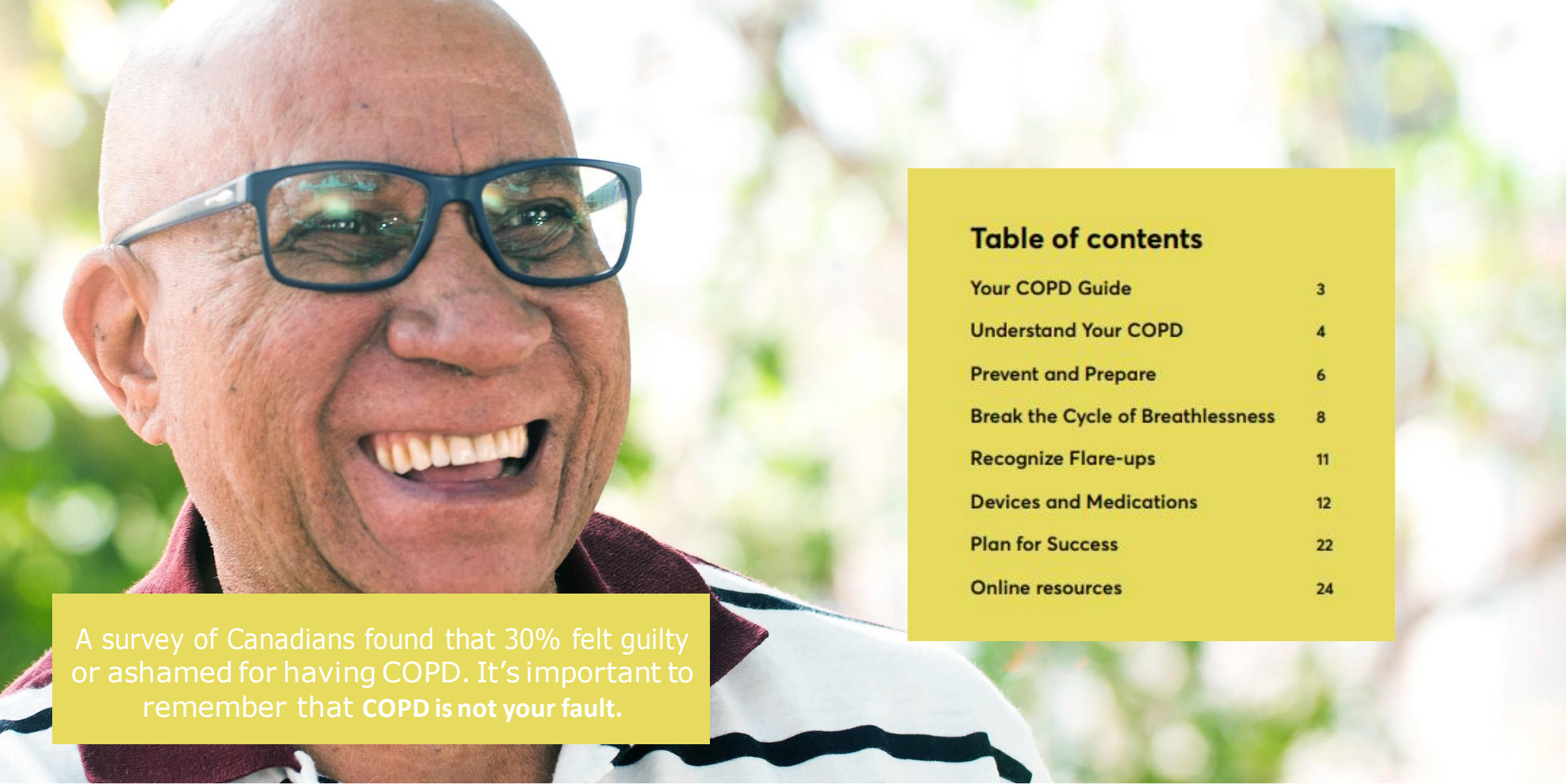


CIRCLE
of
CARE

LEARN TO BREATHE EASIER WITH COPD

A guide for people living with COPD





A survey of Canadians found that 30% felt guilty or ashamed for having COPD. It's important to remember that **COPD is not your fault.**

Table of contents

Your COPD Guide	3
Understand Your COPD	4
Prevent and Prepare	6
Break the Cycle of Breathlessness	8
Recognize Flare-ups	11
Devices and Medications	12
Plan for Success	22
Online resources	24



Staying strong and healthy helps
you manage your COPD.

You Can Live Well With COPD

Make the most of your health:

- COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) is a disease that affects your lungs and airways.
- Understanding your disease and how to manage it can help you to stay healthy.
- You're not alone! Respiratory/COPD educators and healthcare providers have come together to write this booklet, to help you make the most of your health.
- Remember to stay in touch with your healthcare provider to keep an up-to-date action plan for your COPD.

Quick tips for staying healthy



Take your medication
as prescribed*



Work with your
healthcare team



Get your flu and/or
pneumonia shot



Exercise regularly



Choose healthy foods



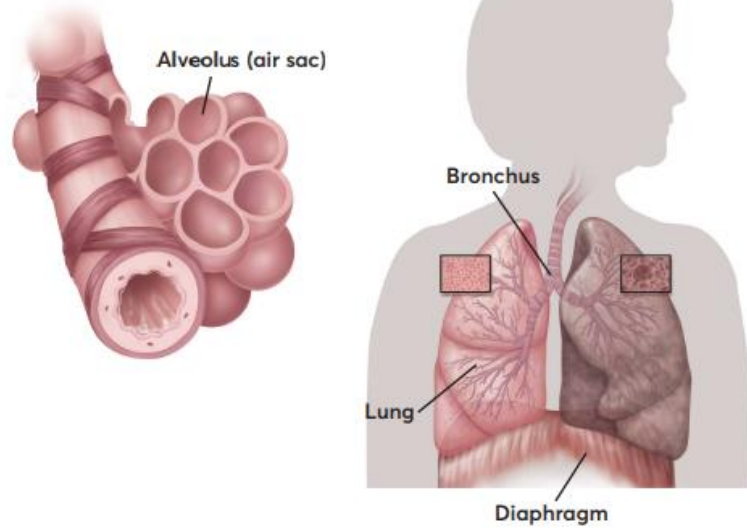
Wash hands to
reduce infection

*Tell your healthcare team promptly if your symptoms change.

Understand Your COPD

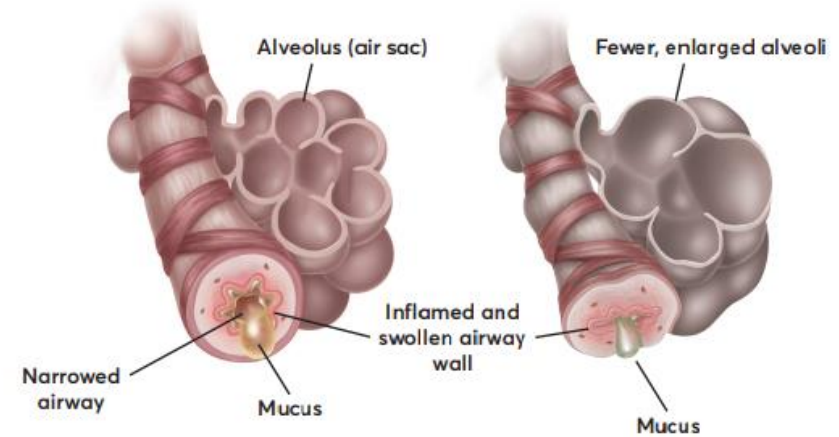
Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a long-term condition that affects your airways and lungs. You may not have heard of COPD before being diagnosed. That's okay – it's never too late to learn!

HEALTHY AIRWAY



COPD over time

Airways may become obstructed, trapping air in the alveoli.



Although COPD cannot be cured, there are ways you can manage COPD and treat your symptoms. You can do this! And, you're not alone –your healthcare team is there to help!

Prevent and Prepare

Certain things can “trigger,” or bring on, your symptoms. Triggers can be different from person to person. Knowing your triggers – and avoiding them – can help you feel in control of your COPD. Below are a few common triggers.



Cleaners/
perfume



Stress/
emotions



Weather
changes

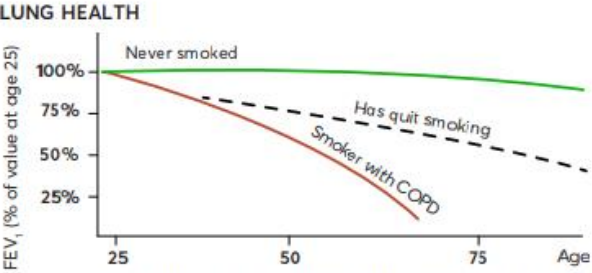


Air pollution, including
second-hand smoke

Quit Smoking

It’s common knowledge that quitting smoking is good for you. But if you have COPD, quitting smoking is the single best thing you can do to improve your health. Quitting now will help slow your COPD – it’s NEVER too late to make a difference.

Resources and support are available, whenever you’re ready. Go to www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/smoking-tobacco/quit-smoking.html, or call 1-866-366-3667.



Reproduced from Br Med J, Fletcher C, Peto R, 1:1645, 1977, with permission from BMJ Publishing Group Ltd.

How Can Breathing Techniques Help in COPD?

MANAGE BREATHLESSNESS

Feeling breathless can be scary. But, there are some things you can do to help manage it. Pursed-lip breathing can be used any time, to help manage breathlessness and help you get air into your lungs.



Close mouth, breathe in slowly and deeply through the nose.



Purse lips, breathe out slowly and deeply through the mouth.

To purse your lips, press them close together as if you are going to whistle.

CATCH YOUR BREATH

Get into a standing or sitting position to help catch your breath. It’s important to be relaxed, and focus on your breathing. You’ve got this.



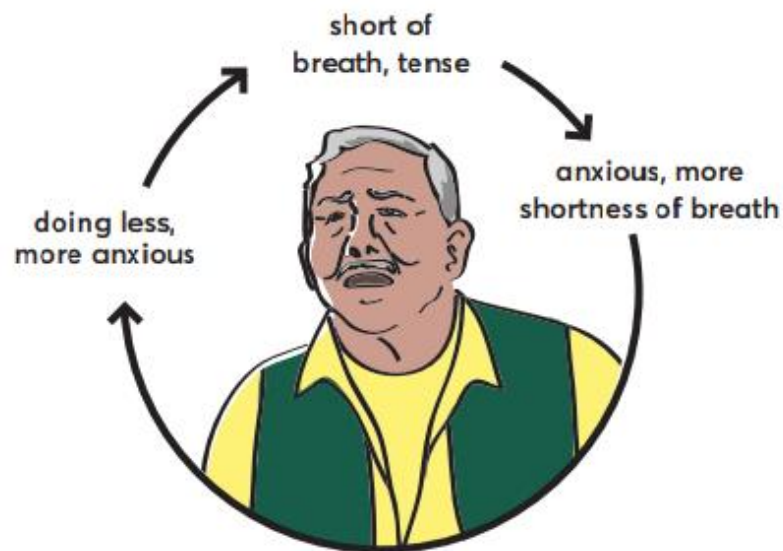
Sitting: Sit with both feet on the ground. Lean head and shoulders forward slightly. Rest your arms on your knees or lightly on a table or chair, keeping them relaxed.



Standing: Lean your back against a stable surface (e.g., wall). Place feet apart slightly, and away from the wall. Relax and lean head and shoulder forward slightly, resting your hands lightly on your thighs or a piece of furniture.

Break The Cycle of Breathlessness

Do you feel more tired and short of breath when you're tense, anxious, or worried? That's normal – but doesn't have to be. Speak to your healthcare team about how to plan time for activities you enjoy. It is important that you don't feel rushed. Use your breathing exercises, practice a relaxation technique to help break the cycle.



USE BREATHING TECHNIQUES TO CATCH YOUR BREATH



Close mouth,
breathe in slowly



Purse lips, breathe
out slowly



Exercise



Support head & relax



Lean forward & relax



Relax

Learning to manage COPD can be difficult, but you're worth it.



Recognize Flare-ups

A flare-up is when your COPD symptoms get worse for at least 48 hours. Recognizing a flare-up is an important part of taking care of yourself.

IF YOU HAVE ANY INCREASE OR CHANGE IN YOUR:



Coughing/Wheezing



Shortness of breath



Mucus production

Report every flare-up, or worsening of symptoms, to your doctor. They can help you decide if your management plan needs to be adjusted.

Follow your COPD action plan – or plan to make one, with your doctor or respiratory educator

Don't have a plan? Speak to your Certified Respiratory Educator (CRE) or visit www.cts-sct.ca/action-plans (*CTS COPD Action Plan and Instructions*) to get a blank plan that you and your healthcare team can fill out.

Select COPD Devices and Medications

There are many ways to manage COPD. Your healthcare team can answer your questions and help you figure out what's best for YOU.

This is not a complete list of available agents. Please speak to your healthcare provider for more information.

DAILY MAINTENANCE - Long-Acting bronchodilators

LAMA (Long-Acting Muscarinic Antagonists)



LABA (Long-Acting Beta₂-Agonists)



RESCUE - Quick-Acting bronchodilators

SABA (Short-Acting Beta₂ Agonists)



SAMA (Short-Acting Muscarinic Antagonists)



DAILY - Combination medications

LABA/LAMA



ICS/LABA Inhaled corticosteroid



SABA/SAMA



ICS/LABA/LAMA



OTHER

Oral Medications

- Methylxanthines: theophylline, oxtriphylline, etc.
- Phosphodiesterase-4 inhibitor: Daxas[®] (roflumilast) tablets
- Oral corticosteroid: prednisone

Other supportive measures

- antibiotics for bacterial infections that may cause COPD flare-ups
- flu vaccine
- oxygen
- pneumonia vaccine
- pulmonary rehabilitation

All trademarks are properties of their respective owners

Know How to Use Your Medication

Taking your medication properly is important. If you have questions about how to take your medication, talk to someone on your healthcare team. Consider bringing a loved one with you to take notes if you think it might help.

Puffer with spacer



Remove cap, shake the puffer 5-6 times, then insert into spacer.



Breathe out gently away from spacer.



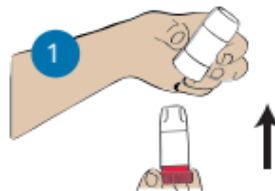
Seal lips around mouthpiece. Press down on inhaler once.



Breathe in very slowly and hold for 5-10 seconds, then breathe out.

Please see your medication package insert for more detailed instructions.
Note: The colour of your device may differ from the one shown in illustrations.

Turbuhaler®



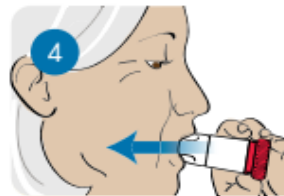
Unscrew cap.



Twist, then twist back. (A click will be heard.)



Breathe out away from Turbuhaler®.



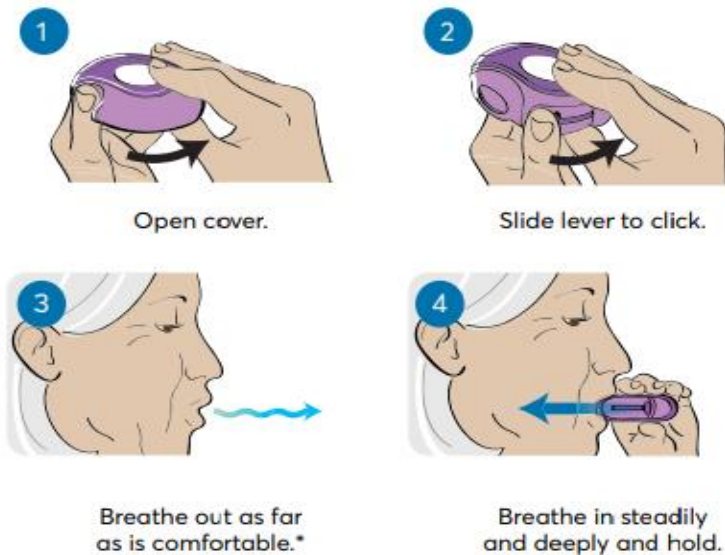
Rapid, deep breath in and hold

Remember – never exhale into your Turbuhaler®

The above instructions do not include instructions on how to prepare a new Turbuhaler® for use. Refer to your product information before you start using a new Turbuhaler®. Please see your medication package insert for more detailed instructions.

Diskus®

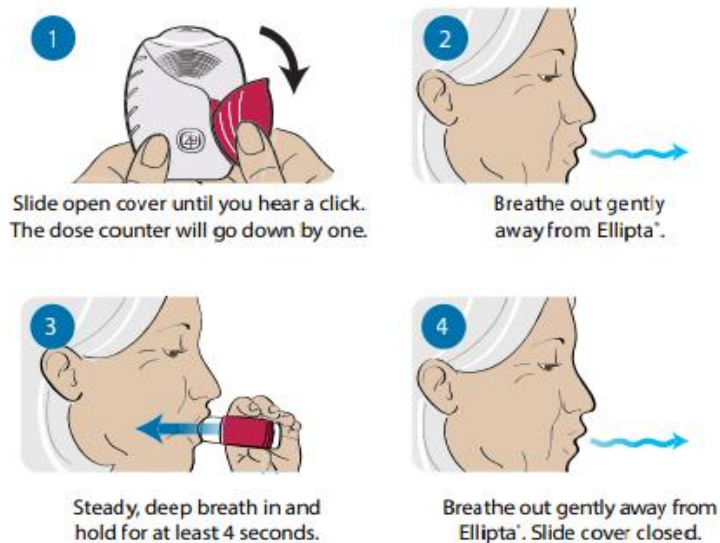
*Remember – never exhale into your Diskus®



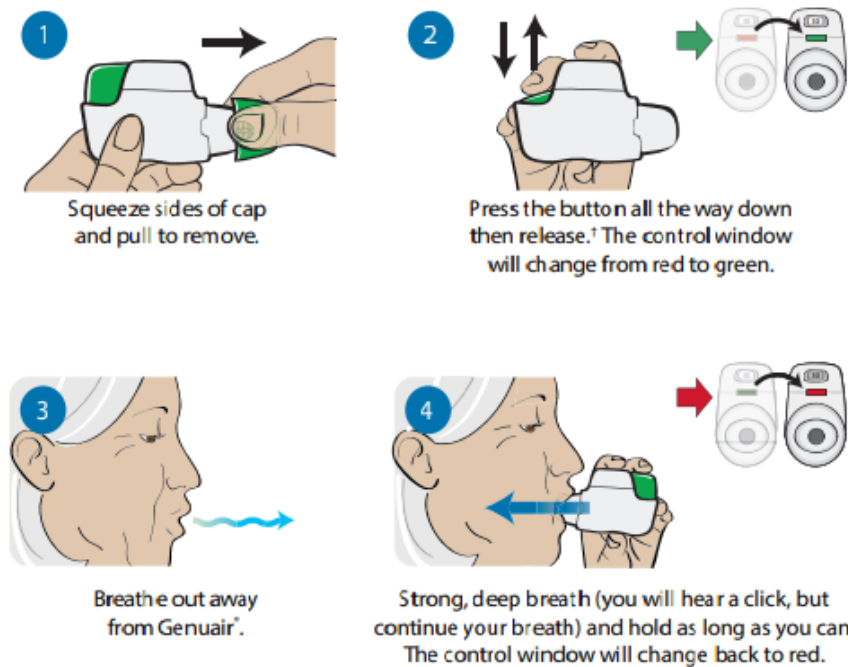
Please see your medication package insert for more detailed instructions.
Note: The colour of your device may differ from the one shown in illustrations.

Ellipta®

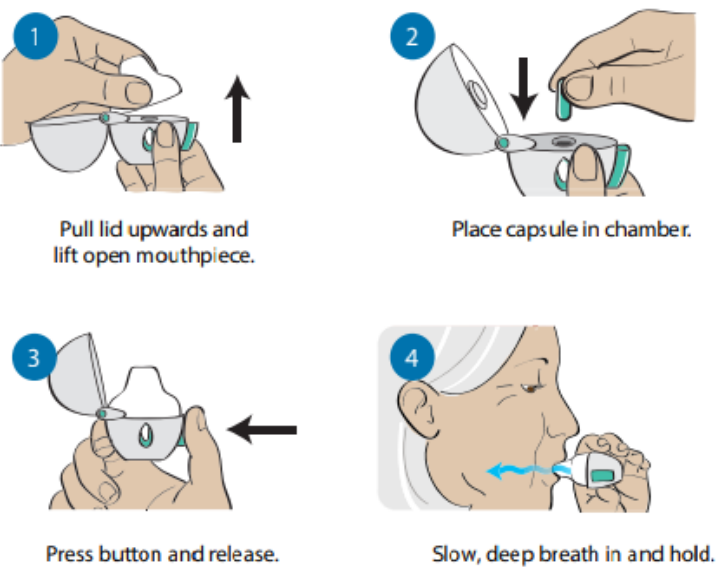
When using Ellipta®, don't block the air vent with your fingers.



Please see your medication package insert for more detailed instructions.
Note: The colour of your device may differ from the one shown in illustrations.



*When you breathe in, do not hold down the button. Please see your medication package insert for more detailed instructions. Note: The colour of your device may differ from the one shown in illustrations.



When you replace the mouthpiece, make sure you hear a click

Please see your medication package insert for more detailed instructions.

Respimat®



Turn base in direction of arrows until it clicks.



Open the cap.



Breathe out away from inhaler.



Slow deep breath in while pressing dose release button and hold your breath for at least 10 seconds.

Please see your medication package insert for more detailed instructions.
Note: The colour of your device may differ from the one shown in illustrations.

Breezhaler®



Pull off cap and open inhaler.



Place capsule in chamber and close.



Press both buttons and release. Breathe out away from inhaler.



Breathe in slowly and deeply; hold your breath for at least 10 seconds.

Please see your medication package insert for more detailed instructions.
Note: The colour of your device may differ from the one shown in illustrations.

Plan for Success

Follow Your COPD Action Plan

A COPD Action Plan is a roadmap to managing your COPD, through feeling well to worsening symptoms. It explains what to do and what medication to take, depending on how you feel.

I FEEL WELL	
Feeling well? That's great! Here are a few things you can do to help stay that way:	
IF:	YOU SHOULD:
I feel well	- Work with your healthcare team - Exercise regularly - Eat healthy - Take your medication
I FEEL DIFFERENT	
It's always okay to talk to your doctor if you're not feeling "right."	
IF:	YOU SHOULD TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR WHEN:
I feel different	- You have changes in your sputum (colour, amount, consistency) - You have experienced an increase in symptoms (chest tightness, breathlessness, cough)

I need help - what should I do?	
COPD can be very serious. It's important to act fast and follow the instructions below.	
IF:	YOU SHOULD:
- My symptoms have worsened. - After 48 hours of treatment my symptoms are not better.	- Notify my contact person and/or see my doctor. - After 5 pm or on the weekend, go to the hospital emergency department
I am extremely short of breath, agitated, confused and/or drowsy, and/or I have chest pain.	- Dial 911 for an ambulance to take me to the hospital emergency department. - Follow up with your doctor as soon as you are able to.
In general, people with COPD experience most troublesome symptoms in the morning. Use the action plan developed with your healthcare provider, and ask your doctor for treatment options that can help.	

More Information and Support

COPD can make you feel alone – that’s normal. In fact, 1 in 3 Canadians living with COPD reported feeling isolated and judged. Remember, you’re not alone on this journey. Your healthcare team is there to support you, and you can also access many resources online or by phone. Reach out if you need to – we all need help sometimes.

The Lung Association

Website: www.lung.ca

Phone: 1-866-717-COPD (2673)

Health Canada

Website:

www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/smoking-tobacco/quit-smoking.html

Phone: 1-866-366-3667

Canadian Thoracic Society

Website: cts-sct.ca

Phone: (613) 235-6650

**Family Physician Airways
Group of Canada**

Website: www.fpagc.com

Phone: (905) 415-3917 ext. 222

Downloadable COPD Action Plan

Website:

cts-sct.ca/wp-content/
uploads/2019/03/5491_THOR_
COPDActionPlanUpdate_2019_
Editable_Eng_v2.pdf

**Canadian Network for
Respiratory Care**

Website: cnrchome.net

Phone: 1-855-355-4672

Canadian Pharmacists Association

Website: www.pharmacists.ca

Phone: 1-800-917-9489, ext. 501

Notes and Questions:

[illegible]

SOCIÉTÉ
CANADIENNE DE
THORACOLOGIE



CANADIAN
THORACIC
SOCIETY



FAMILY PHYSICIAN AIRWAYS GROUP OF CANADA
Regroupement canadien des médecins de famille en soins respiratoires

Réseau
canadien
pour
les soins
respiratoires



Canadian
Network
for
Respiratory
Care



BREATHE | RESPIREZ
the lung association | l'association pulmonaire



CANADIAN
PHARMACISTS
ASSOCIATION

ASSOCIATION DES
PHARMACIENS
DU CANADA

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AstraZeneca

My COPD Action Plan

Patient's Copy

(Patient's Name)

Date



Canadian Respiratory
Guidelines



This is to tell me how I will take care of myself when I have a COPD flare-up.

My goals are

My support contacts are

(Name & Phone Number)

and

(Name & Phone Number)

My Symptoms	I Feel Well	I Feel Worse	I Feel Much Worse URGENT
I have sputum.	My usual sputum colour is: _____	Changes in my sputum, for at least 2 days. Yes ☐ No ☐	My symptoms are not better after taking my flare-up medicine for 48 hours.
I feel short of breath.	When I do this: _____	More short of breath than usual for at least 2 days. Yes ☐ No ☐	I am very short of breath, nervous, confused and/or drowsy, and/or I have chest pain.
My Actions	Stay Well	Take Action	Call For Help
	I use my daily puffers as directed.	If I checked 'Yes' to one or both of the above, I use my prescriptions for COPD flare-ups.	I will call my support contact and/or see my doctor and/or go to the nearest emergency department.
	If I am on oxygen, I use _____ L/min.	I use my daily puffers as usual. If I am more short of breath than usual, I will take _____ puffs of _____ up to a maximum of _____ times per day.	I will dial 911.
Notes:		I use my breathing and relaxation methods as taught to me. I pace myself to save energy.	Important information: I will tell my doctor, respiratory educator, or case manager within 2 days if I had to use any of my flare-up prescriptions. I will also make follow-up appointments to review my COPD Action Plan twice a year.
		If I am on oxygen, I will increase it from _____ L/min to _____ L/min.	

COPD ACTION PLAN (Patient's copy)

Why do I need this COPD Action Plan?

- Your Action Plan is a written contract between you and your health care team. It will tell you how to manage your COPD flare-ups. Use it along with any other information you get from your health care team about managing your COPD every day.
- Your Action Plan will help you and your caregivers to quickly recognize and act to treat your flare-ups. This will keep your lungs and you as healthy as possible.

How will I know that I am having a COPD “flare-up”?

- You will often see a change in your amount or colour of sputum and/or you may find that you are more short of breath than usual. Other symptoms can include coughing and wheezing more.
- Your flare-up Action Plan is to be used only for COPD flare-ups. Remember that there are other reasons you may get short of breath, such as when you have pneumonia, are anxious, or have heart problems.
- Before or during a flare-up you may notice changes in your mood, such as feeling down or anxious. Some people have low energy or feel tired before and during a COPD flare-up.

What triggers a “COPD flare-up”?

- A COPD flare-up can sometimes happen after you get a cold or flu, or when you are stressed and run down.
- Being exposed to air pollution and changes in the weather can also cause COPD flare-ups. To learn about the daily air quality in your area, visit Environment Canada's Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) website at www.ec.gc.ca/cas-aqhi/ and click on 'Your Local AQHI Conditions'. Ask your health care team about ways to avoid all possible triggers.

When should I use this COPD Action Plan?

- Your COPD Action Plan is used only for COPD flare-ups.
- Remember that there are other reasons you may get short of breath, such as when you have pneumonia, are anxious, or have heart problems. If you become more short of breath but don't have symptoms of COPD flare-up, see a doctor as soon as possible.

REMEMBER:

- Learn about your COPD from a respiratory educator, credible websites, such as www.lung.ca, and education programs.
- Take your regular daily medicine as prescribed.
- Don't wait more than 48 hours after the start of a COPD flare-up to take your antibiotic and/or prednisone medicines. See your pharmacist quickly to get your prescriptions for COPD flare-up.
- When you start an antibiotic, make sure that you finish the entire treatment.
- Quitting smoking and making sure that your vaccinations are up-to-date (for flu every year and for pneumonia at least once) will help prevent flare-ups.
- Be as active as possible. Inactivity leads to weakness, which may cause more flare-ups or flare-ups that are worse than usual. Ask your doctor about pulmonary rehabilitation and strategies to help reduce your shortness of breath and improve your quality of life.
- Follow up with your doctor within 2 days after using any of your prescriptions for a COPD flare-up.

MY NOTES AND QUESTIONS:



COPD Zones

Which Zone am I in Today?

Green Zone 	Yellow Zone 	Red Zone 
I Feel Well	I Feel Worse	I Feel Much Worse
I should: • Follow my action • Work with your healthcare team • Exercise regularly • Eat healthy • Take my medications	I should: • Follow my action plan • I should talk to my doctor when: ○ I have a change in my sputum (colour, amount, consistency) ○ I have experienced an increase in symptoms (chest tightness, breathlessness, cough)	I should: • Notify my contact person and/or contact my doctor or go to the Emergency Department (if my doctor is not available): ○ If my symptoms have worsened ○ After 48 hours of treatment my symptoms are not better - I should: • Call 911 if: ○ I am extremely short of breath, agitated, confused and/or drowsy, and/or I have chest pain 

Adapted from Circle of Care - Learn to Breathe Easier with COPD and the CTS - COPD Action Plan

YOUR GO TO COPD

RESOURCE LIST

SCAN THE QR CODES BELOW
WITH YOUR PHONE'S CAMERA
TO TAKE YOU DIRECTLY TO THE
WEBSITE!



COPD360 BY THE COPD FOUNDATION *copdfoundation.org*

An interactive online community - join and receive support, ask questions, learn about events in your area, participate in research, chat with experts, download education materials, and learn how to take action - all on your time, at your pace.



FITNESS FOR BREATH BY THE LUNG HEALTH FOUNDATION *lunghealth.ca*

Fitness for Breath is an exercise maintenance program and support group for people living with chronic lung conditions and is provided virtually for easy access.



LIVING WELL WITH COPD *livingwellwithcopd.com*

The Living Well With COPD self-management program is created for those affected by the disease and will help you on a variety of topics split into 10 separate modules:



THE LUNG HEALTH FOUNDATION *lunghealth.ca*

An extensive list of programs and services are listed below and are provided for free to patients including free handbooks, YouTube videos, health forums and much more.



MYHEALTH ALBERTA *myhealthalberta.ca*

A series of health information and tools that aim to prevent slips or relapses for those that have quit smoking.



References

AstraZeneca. (2016). Learn to Breathe Easier with COPD: A guide for people living with COPD. *Circle of Care*. Toronto, ON, Canada: AstraZeneca .

Canadian Thoracic Society. (2022). *Guidline Library*. Retrieved 2023, from <https://cts-sct.ca/guideline-library/>

Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease. (2023). *GOLD*. Retrieved 2023, from <https://goldcopd.org/2023-gold-report-2/>