

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

A PATIENT EDUCATION GUIDE



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Table of Contents

What is COPD?.....	1
Risk Factors	1
Signs and Symptoms.....	2
Diagnosis	3
Treatment	4
Take Your Medicines as Prescribed.....	6
My Medications Schedule	7
Living Well with COPD	9
Feel Better	11
Complications	12
What to Do If Your Symptoms Worsen	13
Get Support	13
Commonly Asked Questions	14
Before You Phone — Check Your Zone	15
Green Zone: All Clear	15
Yellow Zone: Caution	15
Red Zone: Medical Alert.....	15
Goals	17
Step 1-9.....	17-30
Congratulations!	31
Communication Sheet.....	33
Statement of Nondiscrimination	34


Living Well with COPD

COPD is a serious illness, but there are treatments that can help you feel better. You also may make lifestyle changes to keep your COPD under control and you out of the hospital.

- **Don't smoke.** Quitting smoking is the best thing a person can do to prevent further damage to their lungs.


 **Helpful tip:** Ask your health care provider about a smoking cessation program near you.

- **Avoid pollutants.** Try to avoid lung irritants such as dust and strong fumes.


 **Helpful tip:** Stay inside if outdoor air quality is poor and avoid places with cigarette smoke.

- **Visit your doctor regularly.** Be sure to talk about all your breathing symptoms and any activities you may have trouble doing because you cannot breathe easily.
- **Understand the COPD medications** you are prescribed and take them as directed.
- **Get a flu shot.** Your doctor also may want you to be vaccinated against pneumonia.



 **Helpful tip:** Remember to take extra care during flu season to wash and sanitize your hands often. Avoid people who are sick, if possible.

- **Ask your doctor** whether you also should receive a vaccination for the H1N1 flu.
- **Avoid very cold air.**

 **Helpful tip:** Place a scarf around your face for protection on cold, windy days when outdoors.