What is my COPD Rescue Pack?

Your COPD Rescue Pack contains a supply of standby medications to start if your COPD gets worse before you are able to see your GP.

The COPD Rescue Pack contains two different medications:

- Steroid tablets: Prednisolone 5mg tablets x 40
- Antibiotic capsules: Doxycycline 100mg capsules x 6

or ..............................................

Please read this leaflet and keep it with your rescue pack medications.

When should I take my COPD Rescue Pack?

Only start your rescue pack medication if you are having a flare-up of your COPD.

You should have a COPD management plan explaining the steps you should take in the event of a flare-up (exacerbation) of your COPD. If you do not have a current management plan, contact your GP or COPD nurse.

Your COPD may be getting worse if you have any of these symptoms:

- increased breathlessness,
- new or increased wheeze and/or chest tightness,
- change in sputum (phlegm) colour or quantity (see the colour chart on the next page for more info),
- cough – new or increased.

If you have one of these symptoms, increase your reliever inhaler (blue salbutamol) inhaler medication, rest and keep indoors (see your COPD management plan).
If you have **two or more symptoms** for over 24 hours, despite using more of your reliever inhaler (blue salbutamol) then start your rescue pack as follows:

1. First, check your Rescue Pack medicines are not out of date - the expiry date is on the box.

   **If the medicines have passed their expiry dates then do not use them; instead contact your Doctor urgently to obtain a new supply.**

2. Steroid (Prednisolone 5mg) tablets - Take EIGHT tablets immediately and then take EIGHT tablets again as a single dose each morning, with food, for five days.

3. If one of the symptoms is a change in the colour of your sputum (phlegm), especially if it is becoming green or brown you should also start the antibiotic capsules.

   *(please see sputum chart on page 7)*

4. Antibiotics (doxycycline 100mg) capsules – Take TWO capsules straight away and then ONE capsule, starting the next day, for a total of five days.

   **If you take calcium tablets do not take them within 2 hours of taking the doxycycline capsules**

   **Or (advice if an alternative to doxycycline):**

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What else should I do?
If you start your rescue pack, you must contact your GP or COPD nurse to inform them that you are less well and have started the rescue pack.

What should I do if I’ve forgotten to take a dose?
It is important that you take the medication as prescribed. However, if you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as you remember and then carry on taking your next dose at its regular time. If you realise you have missed a dose but it is almost time for your next dose, do not take a double dose, skip the dose you have missed, take the next dose at its regular time and then carry on as normal with any remaining doses.

Are there any side effects?
All medications may cause side effects. With short courses such as your COPD Rescue Pack, most people don’t have any problems. The patient information leaflets supplied with each medication within your Rescue pack list the more common side effects and other precautions for each medication. Please read these leaflets. If you are concerned about any side effects please contact your COPD nurse, GP or Community Pharmacist for further information.
If it is out of hours phone NHS 111.
If you develop any emergency symptoms, even after starting the rescue pack, such as:

- severe breathlessness
- chest pain
- high fever or temperature
- Feeling of agitation, fear, drowsiness or confusion

**Contact your GP or community matron immediately.**

**In an extreme emergency dial 999 and ask for an ambulance.**

If you need to go to the hospital please take all your medications with you.

Make sure you request a replacement rescue pack once you have recovered.
Sputum colour chart
If you or the individual you are caring for need support reading this leaflet please ask a member of staff for advice.