

How to Handle a COPD Flare-up

Knowing what to do if your symptoms suddenly get worse is part of learning how to manage Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD).

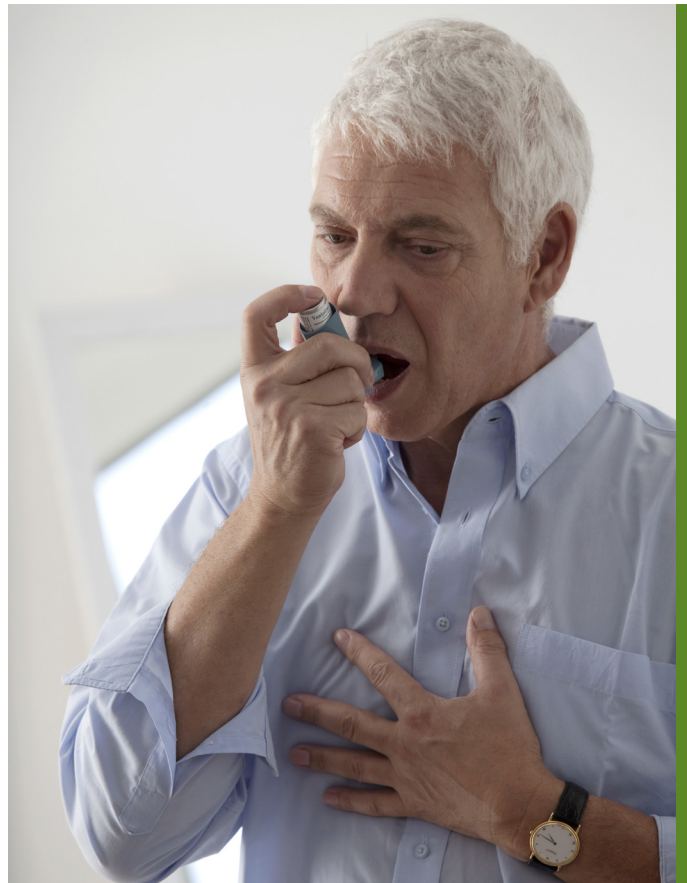
If you feel a flare-up coming on, you'll notice warning signs and symptoms that are more intense than usual. You might:

- > Have trouble catching your breath.
- > Have less energy for daily activities.
- > Cough more and bring up more mucus.
- > Need to use your inhaler more often.
- > Feel like you have a chest cold.
- > Have trouble sleeping.
- > Not feel like eating.

HEADING OFF TROUBLE

There are steps you can take to manage a bad COPD day. If you have a COPD action plan you filled out with your doctor, it will help you know what to do. For example, you may be able to help keep a flare-up from getting worse by:

- > Taking medication as directed for a flare-up, such as your quick-relief inhaler, a steroid or an antibiotic, if prescribed.
- > Using your oxygen therapy as prescribed.
- > Getting plenty of rest.
- > Pursing your lips while you take a few deep breaths. This may help you relax and slow your breathing.
- > Being extra careful to avoid smoke or other irritants.



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WHEN TO CALL THE DOCTOR OR 911

If you're not sure what to do, call your doctor right away. You should also call your doctor if your symptoms don't improve or if they suddenly worsen.

Certain signs can suggest a COPD emergency. For example, call 911 if:

- > You have severe shortness of breath or a hard time talking, especially at rest.
- > You can't do any activities or sleep because of your breathing.
- > You have fever or chills.
- > You feel confused or drowsy.
- > You have chest pains.
- > You cough up blood.
- > Your lips or fingernails turn blue or gray.
- > Your heartbeat is very fast.
- > The recommended treatment for symptoms that are getting worse isn't working. ■

Sources: American Lung Association;
National Institutes of Health



About Pulmonary Rehabilitation

If your doctor recommends a pulmonary rehabilitation (rehab) program, you owe it to yourself to go. Pulmonary rehab is an exercise and education program for people with COPD and other breathing problems. Studies have shown the pulmonary rehab programs make a big difference for people at all stages of lung disease. Specifically, the program can:

- > Ease your shortness of breath
- > Build your capacity for exercise and activity
- > Reduce anxiety and depression caused by lung disease
- > Help you stay out of the hospital
- > Improve your quality of life

Your doctor can refer you to a program in your area. To verify if your plan covers pulmonary rehabilitation, call Member Services at **800-538-5038**.



Our Care Management Team

We're here to help! Care Management is a program offered to all SelectHealth members who need extra support for their healthcare needs. The program is included in your health insurance at no additional cost. Care managers can help provide you with education about your health, work with your doctor's office to help coordinate your care, help you navigate the healthcare system, and answer questions about benefits and claims. They can also help you set health-related goals and work with you to achieve them.

Our care managers are registered nurses or licensed clinical social workers. At SelectHealth, we know things happening in your life (like family or work stress) make it difficult to manage your health. We can help connect you with resources and support you in achieving your health goals. If you have a chronic condition, new diagnosis, or need additional support to live a healthier life, SelectHealth care managers can help. ■



Pharmacy Corner

SelectHealth currently offers additional generic medications. Check with your provider to see if you could benefit from these cost savings!

PREFERRED PRODUCTS

Symbicort – preferred brand copay

Airduo generic – fluticasone/salmeterol

Advair generic (also called Wixela) – fluticasone/salmeterol



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If you have a Medicare Advantage® plan, call us toll-free at **855-442-9900**, weekdays 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., closed Sunday. Outside of these hours of operation, please leave a message and your call will be returned within one business day. TTY users, please call 711. SelectHealth is an HMO plan sponsor with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in SelectHealth Advantage depends on contract renewal.

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