



BREATHING BETTER IN SWINTON



CONTENTS

3 Introduction



3 What is COPD?



4 Symptoms of COPD



6 Quit Smoking



7 Exercise



8 General Health



9 Eat Well



10 Air Pollution



INTRODUCTION

When you have a long-term condition, you might sometimes feel you don't have control over your health, your life and what happens to you.

Self-managing your condition – with support from others – gives you control. It helps to know all about your condition, your symptoms, your medication and how to cope with flare-ups. It also makes your day-to-day life easier.

COPD

What does COPD stand for?

Chronic = it's a long-term condition and does not go away

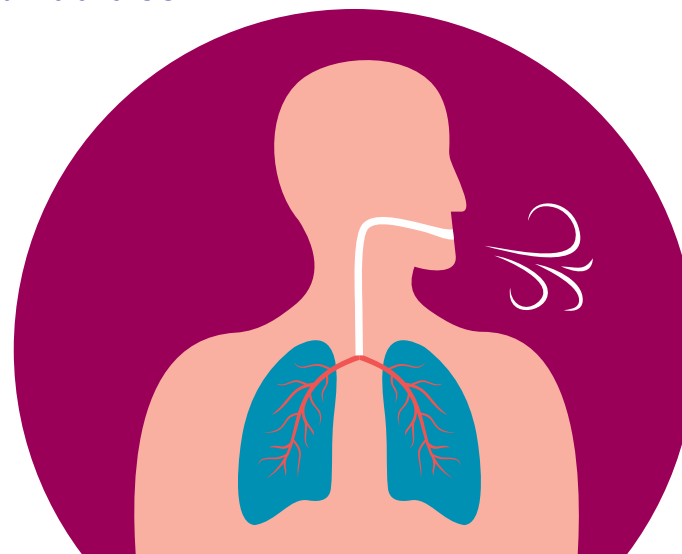
Obstructive = your airways are narrowed, so it's harder to breathe out quickly and air gets trapped in your chest

Pulmonary = it affects your lungs

Disease = it's a medical condition

You are most likely to develop COPD if you're over 35 and are, or have been, a smoker or had chest problems as a child.

Children are more likely to develop asthma which can result in developing COPD as an adult. Some people can however have both asthma and COPD.



What's the difference between COPD and asthma?

With COPD, your airways have become narrowed permanently – inhaled medication can help to open them up to some extent. With asthma, the narrowing of your airways comes and goes, often when you're exposed to a trigger – something that irritates your airways – such as dust, pollen or tobacco smoke. Inhaled medication can open your airways fully, prevent symptoms and relieve symptoms by relaxing your airways

This booklet sets out steps people can take to manage living with COPD and provides some top tips for support.

- Quit smoking
- Exercise
- Look after your general health – have vaccinations and review your medications regularly
- Eat well
- Reduce contact with air pollution when possible

What are the symptoms of COPD?

Symptoms include:

- getting short of breath easily when you do everyday things such as going for a walk or doing housework
- having a cough that lasts a long time
- wheezing in cold weather
- producing more sputum or phlegm than usual

You might get these symptoms all the time, or they might appear or get worse when you have an infection or breathe in smoke or fumes.



My symptoms are?

I will?

My symptoms are normal for me at this time

Continue to maintain my current health management plan

I am more breathless than normal but have no other signs of changes to my health

I will use my reliever medication as prescribed by my GP

I will update my GP or health care worker when I next have my review

I am much more breathless despite taking my reliever medication

I will continue to use my medication as prescribed

I will tell my GP or health care worker within two days of starting this treatment, and arrange a review

My breathing is much worse than normal despite treatment

or / and

I have chest pain or high fever

I will call my GP the same day, as soon as my symptoms become this bad

If I can't call myself, I will ask someone to call for me

If I can't wait to see my doctor, I will call 999 straight away

If I'm too breathless, I'll ask someone to call for me



QUIT SMOKING

If you can stop smoking you will live longer and feel better. If you have a lung condition, quitting is an effective way to manage your own health – you will feel less short of breath and cough less.

Using an e-cigarette or vaping is far less risky than smoking. It's a less harmful way to receive nicotine and the vapour contains few of the harmful chemicals found in cigarette smoke. There is now also good evidence that e-cigarettes can help smokers quit.

It is never too late to stop, no matter how long you have smoked for. Your lungs will work better, even if you stop when you're over 60. If you stop smoking when you're 30, you're likely to live 10 years longer.

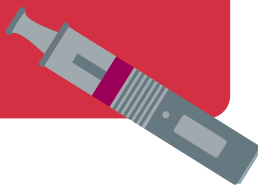
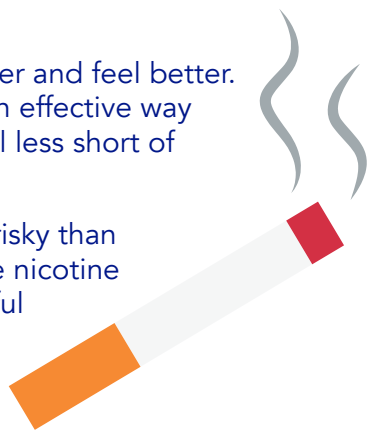
Top Tips

- Get support. It can be hard to change a long-term habit. With support from friends, family and professionals, you're more likely to be successful.
- Use a Nicotine replacement therapy such as patches, gum, sprays, lozenges and inhalators. They are available on prescription from your GP or local Stop Smoking service, or to buy from a pharmacy. All the therapies release nicotine into your bloodstream in a safe way.
- Use e-cigarettes (vapes), they are 20 times less harmful to your health than smoking.

Did you know?

The Stop Smoking service in Salford is run by Health Improvement Team. A number of sessions are run across Salford.

You can check if the session you want to attend is running by calling **0800 952 1000** or email **health.improvement@salford.gov.uk**.



EXERCISE

If you have a lung condition, being active can help to improve your quality of life and help you manage your condition. Try to do some regular exercise such as: swimming, gardening, walking or dancing. If you haven't exercised for a while, talk to your GP or health care worker first as they may be able to recommend local classes or give you some exercises to do at home.

When you're active, you want to get moderately out of breath, but not too much. Check you are exerting yourself the right amount using the talk test.

The talk test

Say out loud: **"This activity is going to do me good!"**

- If you can say the sentence with two or three stops for breath, you're working at a moderate intensity. This is your aim.
- If you can say the whole sentence without stopping, you can increase the intensity.
- If you can't speak, or can't say more than one word at a time, you may want to slow down.

Did you know?

Salford Community Leisure Active Lifestyles Team offer a range of community based activities.

Email **Active.lifestyles@scll.co.uk**

Call **0161 778 0577**



GENERAL HEALTH

Look after your general health – have vaccinations and review your medications regularly.

Once you have been diagnosed with a lung condition you may be concerned that you will not be able to manage. Don't bottle things up – talk to someone you trust. It is important to stay active and sociable, and to learn more about COPD.

You will be invited to an annual review meeting to discuss how you are self-managing. Many people fail to attend these sessions but they can help support you, be an opportunity for you to ask questions, and raise any concerns you may have about your condition.

Attending group sessions such as breathing and singing groups as well as self-help groups can provide a great source of peer support.

Make sure you have your annual flu jab and keep reviewing your medications – if you are concerned, speak to your pharmacists.

Top Tips

- Keep active and join social groups to look after your mental wellbeing
- Attend your review meeting – this is your opportunity to discuss your condition and raise any concerns you may have
- Speak to your pharmacists about flu vaccinations

Did you know?

Salford has a social prescribing programme. A Community Connector can help you access social groups in your neighbourhood. For more information, speak to your health care worker who can refer you.



EAT WELL

Having a reduced appetite or being dehydrated can be because eating makes you feel breathless. A dry mouth can be caused by breathing through your mouth, taking inhaled medications and using oxygen.

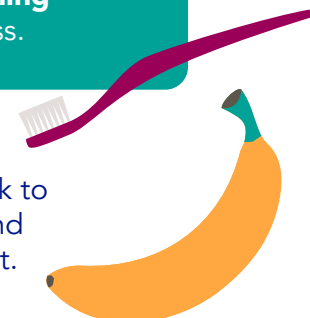
You may find your lung condition causes you to put on weight. This may be because you become less active or your medication has increased your appetite. Being overweight makes breathing more difficult because stored fat squashes your lungs. This is more likely if the weight is around your middle.

Top Tips

- If you struggle to chew and breathe when you eat, **go for softer, moist foods** that are easier to chew and swallow.
- Try having more **nourishing liquids** such as milk, smoothies, juice and soups.
- Breathing can sometimes become harder after eating a large meal. Try **eating smaller meals** and snacks more often.
- **Take time when you eat.** Try to swallow every mouthful before going on to the next.
- Make sure you **drink enough fluids** – at least six to eight cups a day. Ice cold drinks can be refreshing.
- Look after your teeth and mouth by **brushing your teeth** regularly and using dental floss.

Did you know?

If you have problems swallowing your food, talk to your doctor. They may refer you to a speech and language therapist for a swallowing assessment.



AIR POLLUTION

Reduce contact with air pollution when possible.

Air pollution is especially harmful to people who are living with a lung condition, such as asthma or COPD.

If you're exposed to high pollution levels, for example on a busy road or during a high pollution episode, you may experience immediate symptoms. These include irritated airways, feeling out of breath and coughing. On days when pollution levels are low, you don't need to be worried about going outside but even on these days, it's a good idea to avoid spending long periods of time in places where pollution levels build up, such as busy roads – particularly if you have a lung condition.

Did you know?

The UK population spends up to 90% of its time indoors which means the air we are most exposed to is inside.

Ventilate your home - open windows and use extractor fans when cooking or using cleaning products, but close windows near busy roads during rush hours.

Top Tips



- Walk or cycle more
- Catch the bus, train or tram - can you walk or cycle to your local stop or station?
- Choose quieter streets to reduce exposure, for both walkers or drivers
- Leave the car for the school run, the school run can create high levels of air pollution at the school gates
- Car share
- Engine off when you stop! Switch your engine off to cut down on air pollution and save some fuel at the same time
- Recycle your air – drivers can be exposed to air pollution inside their vehicle so remember to use your recycled air setting
- Consider retiming your regular journeys to avoid peak hours
- Correctly inflated car tyres can save fuel and reduce pollution by making sure your vehicle runs efficiently
- Consider a lower emission or electric vehicle





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Inspiring Communities Together is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation Registration number: 1157053. Inspiring Housing is a Community Land Trust registration number 8335