

## Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) rescue medicines

### What are COPD rescue medicines?

Your COPD rescue medicines are a supply of standby medications that you should start if your COPD gets worse and you are not able to see your GP.

You will have been prescribed two different COPD rescue medications:

<b>Steroid tablets:</b>	Prednisolone 5mg tablets x 30
<b>Antibiotic capsules:</b>	Amoxicillin 500mg x 15 or Doxycycline 100mg x 8

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

### When should I take my COPD rescue medicines?

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

Your COPD management plan explains the steps that you should take if you experience a flare-up of your COPD. If you do not have a current management plan, contact your GP or COPD nurse. You should make a note of the expiry date of your medicines and ensure you request another supply from your GP or nurse if you have medicines that are out of date.

Your COPD may be getting worse (a flare-up) if you have any of these symptoms:

- Increased breathlessness
- New or increased wheeze and/or chest tightness
- Change in sputum (phlegm) colour or quantity
- Cough – new or increased.

If you have **one of these symptoms**, increase your reliever (blue) inhaler medication, rest and stay indoors (see your COPD management plan).

If you have **two or more symptoms** for over 24 hours, despite using more of your reliever (blue) inhaler, start your rescue pack as follows:

Steroid (prednisolone 5mg) tablets	Take <b>SIX tablets immediately</b> and then take six tablets as a single dose each morning, with food, for five days.
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If one of the symptoms is a change in the colour of your sputum (phlegm) you should also start the antibiotic capsules (Amoxicillin or Doxycycline), especially if it is becoming green or brown.

### **What else should I do?**

If you start your rescue pack, you must contact your GP or COPD nurse to tell them that you are less well and that you have started the rescue pack.

If you develop any emergency symptoms, even after starting the rescue pack, such as:

- Severe breathlessness
- Chest pain
- Inability to complete sentences
- High fever or temperature
- Symptoms coming on very quickly.

### **Contact your GP 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.