



Royal College
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NACAP

Do you have chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)?

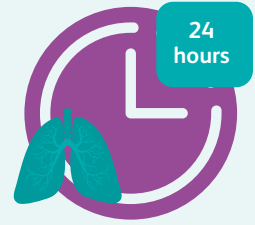
Here are five key things to ask if you are admitted to hospital with a flare-up of your COPD

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Asking the five key questions in this booklet will help you to receive the best treatment for your COPD and improve your understanding of your care. If you are too unwell to ask these questions yourself, ask a friend, family member or carer to ask them for you.

1 Have I seen a respiratory specialist within 1 day (24 hours) of being admitted to hospital because of my COPD?



Why is this important?

Respiratory specialists are healthcare professionals with a special interest in treating people with lung problems. People with COPD who see a respiratory specialist quickly are more likely to receive the right care at the right time.

What can I do?

Ask to see a respiratory specialist as quickly as possible if you are admitted to hospital for a flare-up of your COPD.

2 Has my diagnosis of COPD been confirmed with a breathing test called spirometry?



Why is this important?

Spirometry is a simple breathing test that will confirm whether you have COPD. This involves blowing hard into a small tube (spirometer) to measure how much you can breathe out in one forced breath. Having your diagnosis confirmed will **make sure you receive the right care for your COPD**, especially when you go to hospital.

What can I do?

If you have not had this test, speak to the hospital team about having one before you go home or at a follow-up appointment.

3 Will pulmonary rehabilitation help me after being discharged?



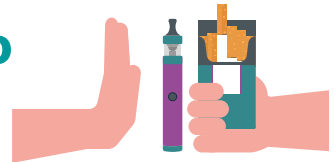
Why is this important?

Pulmonary rehabilitation (PR) is a programme of exercise, education and support designed for people with lung problems, including COPD, to help them breathe better and manage their condition as well as possible. Everyone admitted to hospital for a COPD flare-up should be considered for PR before discharge, with the programme arranged for after they leave the hospital.

What can I do?

If you have not been referred for PR before or recently (in particular, if you haven't completed PR within the last year), ask your doctor or nurse if PR would help you.

4 What support is there to help me stop smoking?



Why is this important?

If you smoke, quitting may stop your COPD getting worse and improve your quality of life. **It's never too late to stop.** If you stop smoking, you are likely to have fewer COPD flare-ups.

If you let your hospital team know that you smoke, they can help you find support to quit. This could be with stop-smoking medicines, or with the help of a specialist counsellor.

What can I do?

Tell your doctor or nurse that you smoke and ask how you can be supported to stop.

5 What do I need before I leave hospital?

Why is this important?

Before you leave hospital, it is important that your hospital team makes sure that you have all the care and information you need, and that you know who to see if you need more advice. This is called a 'discharge bundle' and it helps you to continue to receive the care you need so you are less likely to have another flare-up of your COPD.

Discharge bundles can include:

- > checking that you can use your inhalers properly
- > checking you're on the right medication and have a self-management plan
- > arranging follow-up care (eg with a GP or community service)
- > arranging PR as described above.

What can I do?

If you don't receive a discharge bundle, speak to the hospital team and request one.



My five questions checklist

I have:

been reviewed by a respiratory specialist within 1 day (24 hours) of being admitted to hospital for a flare-up of my COPD

had a spirometry test to confirm my diagnosis of COPD

been checked to see if PR will help me, and if so, referred on to a programme

(if I smoke) told my clinician that I smoke and asked how I can stop

received a discharge bundle before I leave hospital

Where can I get more information and advice?

COPD Patient passport – a 5-minute online checklist to get a personalised report on the care you are receiving.

NHS patient information – an overview of the symptoms, causes and treatment of COPD, as well as living with the condition.

Stop smoking resources – a factsheet on the support available to stop smoking.

PALS – your local Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) offers confidential advice, support and information on health-related matters.

Pulmonary rehabilitation – NACAP's guide to PR helps you understand what to expect through your PR journey.

Breathe Easy Activity – local groups that provide support and information for people living with a lung condition and their carers.

If you have any questions, please ask the hospital staff who gave you this booklet or contact the NACAP team via copd@rcp.ac.uk or call **020 3075 1526**.

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