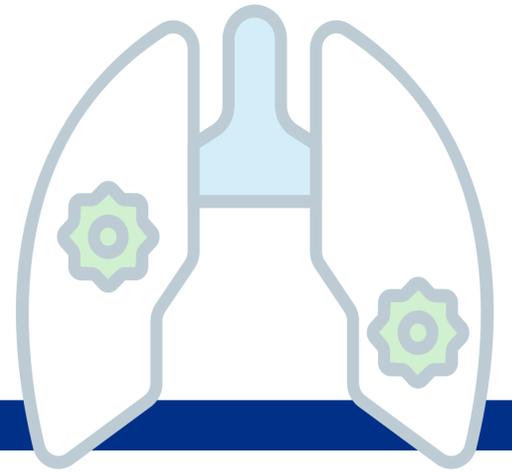


Do you have COPD?



Here are some top tips for staying well in winter 2020-21

Winter is the time of year that viruses circulate (this year including colds, flu and COVID-19). Viruses may cause a chest infection and a flare up of COPD.



- 1 Keep warm and drink plenty of fluids**
to make your secretions easier to clear. Heat your home to at least 18°C. To check if you are eligible for help with paying your heating bills ring SHINE on 0300 555 0195.
- 2 Keep active**
but check the weather before going out and wear warm clothes. If it's cold, wearing a scarf / mask over your mouth and nose can help warm the air.
- 3 Get your vaccinations for Flu and Pneumonia**
Flu and Pneumonia vaccinations may help patients with a chronic respiratory problem. Flu vaccinations need to be repeated every year. A single pneumonia vaccine should protect you for life. Check with your GP if you have not had one.
- 4 Follow government social distancing guidance**
COVID-19 is circulating and until there is a vaccine it is important to stay at least 1 metre away from others. If you cannot do this, wear a mask. If you struggle to wear a mask, practice with one at home or wear a scarf over your mouth and nose.
- 5 Take your respiratory medicines regularly**
at the correct dose. Plan ahead so that you do not run out. If you are not sure how much or what to take, please check with your GP or pharmacist.
- 6 Quit smoking**
as smoking can make your lungs more susceptible to infection by viruses and bacteria. You're four times more likely to quit with NHS help. Call the National Smokefree Helpline on 0300 123 1044 or look online for advice.
- 7 Keep a rescue pack**
of antibiotics and steroid tablets to help treat flare ups more quickly. Steroids may help if your reliever inhaler (usually blue) doesn't relieve increased breathlessness with increased clear / white phlegm. Additionally, antibiotics may help if your sputum becomes darker, smellier or there is more of it. Discuss with your GP whether this may be appropriate for you.
- 8 Keep in Touch with friends and family**
Make sure you ask for support when you need it. If you are 60 or over and struggling with loneliness, contact Age UK on 0800 055 6112. If you are under 60 or severely low in mood, contact the Samaritans on 116 123.
- 9 Eat healthily**
Plan ahead and ensure you have access to fruit and vegetables this winter. Tinned and frozen food can be as good as fresh. Contact Age UK (see above) for help shopping and the Trussell Trust (0808 208 2138) for help paying for food or finding your local food bank.
- 10 Contact your GP / Respiratory team on the number below if you are struggling with your symptoms or you have had more than 1 exacerbation:**



If you are advised to attend the hospital, please be reassured that there are precautions in place to protect you against COVID-19.