



# My COPD Checklist

This checklist is designed to help you self-manage your Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). If you are not able to answer **YES**  to all of these statements, make an appointment with your doctor or other member of your healthcare team to discuss the checklist item further.

**My diagnosis of COPD has been confirmed by spirometry.** Spirometry is a simple breathing test used to confirm a diagnosis of COPD. It is important to have an accurate diagnosis so you can start the right treatment.

**I understand how and when to use my COPD Action Plan and when to talk to my doctor about a flare-up.** A COPD Action Plan (completed with your doctor) provides instructions on what to do if you have symptoms of a flare-up, also called an exacerbation. A COPD Action Plan can help you recognise a flare-up and guide you to start your treatment early. This may help you avoid needing to go to hospital for treatment. If you have had a flare-up, make an appointment with your GP. They may need to make changes to your treatment plan.

**The role of my COPD medicines has been explained to me.** Taking your medicines every day as prescribed by your doctor will help control your symptoms. It is important your healthcare team talk to you about what your medicines do and when to use them, including those that you might use during a flare-up. If you feel unsure about your medicines, speak to your doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

**I have been shown how to correctly use my inhaler device.** Using your inhalers correctly will help you get the most benefit from your inhaled medications. Using an inhaler device is a skill and a trained health professional should teach you how to use each inhaler. They should check your technique regularly and when you get a new type of inhaler to ensure you are using it correctly.

**My vaccinations are up-to-date.** Having vaccinations for influenza and pneumococcal pneumonia can reduce the risk of a flare-up (exacerbation) of symptoms, particularly during winter. A COVID-19 vaccination will also reduce the risk of severe illness from COVID-19 (coronavirus).



**I have been referred to pulmonary rehabilitation or I have been prescribed an exercise program.**

Pulmonary rehabilitation is a program provided by specially trained health professionals. It teaches you how to exercise safely and how to manage your breathlessness. Research shows pulmonary rehabilitation reduces the frequency of COPD flare-ups and can prevent hospital admissions. If you cannot access pulmonary rehabilitation, your GP can refer you to a physiotherapist or exercise physiologist who can develop an exercise program tailored to your individual needs.

**I exercise regularly to improve my health and wellbeing, physical fitness and reduce symptoms.**

After you finish pulmonary rehabilitation, it is important to continue exercising to maintain the benefits. Lung Foundation Australia's Lungs in Action program is a safe and fun community-based exercise class. You may be referred by your pulmonary rehabilitation program or by your GP.

**If I smoke, I have been offered support to quit.**

There are many benefits in quitting smoking, but many people need help to quit. Speak to your doctor about your specific quit goals. They can help you choose the right tools that have been proven effective by research.

**I have regular visits with my healthcare team to monitor my COPD.**

Living well with COPD relies on a partnership between you and your healthcare team. Having regular contact with them is important so you can discuss any changes in your symptoms and take steps to prevent worsening of your condition.

**I have been offered support to look after my emotional wellbeing.**

If you are feeling anxious, overwhelmed or experience changes in mood, help is available. Your doctor can work with you to develop a Mental Health Treatment Plan. You can also connect with other people living with COPD via Lung Foundation Australia's free peer support program.

**I have been provided with or I have accessed information about COPD.**

There are steps you can take to control your symptoms and slow the progression of COPD.



## **ACCESS INFORMATION AND SUPPORT TODAY**

Lung Foundation Australia offers a range of resources, information, and programs that can help you to better understand your condition and empower you to live your best life. Our Respiratory Care Nurse program is a free telephone-based service available for people living with COPD that provides you with guidance and follow up on all aspects of your condition according to the management guidelines.

Contact our Information and Support Centre team today to access information, guidance and support as well as connection to the Respiratory Care Nurse, peer support or a local Lungs in Action provider.

[lungfoundation.com.au](https://lungfoundation.com.au) | Freecall 1800 654 301 | [enquiries@lungfoundation.com.au](mailto:enquiries@lungfoundation.com.au)