



NIAGARA HEALTH SYSTEM
SYSTÈME DE SANTÉ DE NIAGARA
TOGETHER IN EXCELLENCE - LEADERS IN HEALTHCARE

Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant
Community Care Access Centre



Centre d'accès aux soins communautaires
de Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant

Living with COPD

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease



Patient Information Booklet

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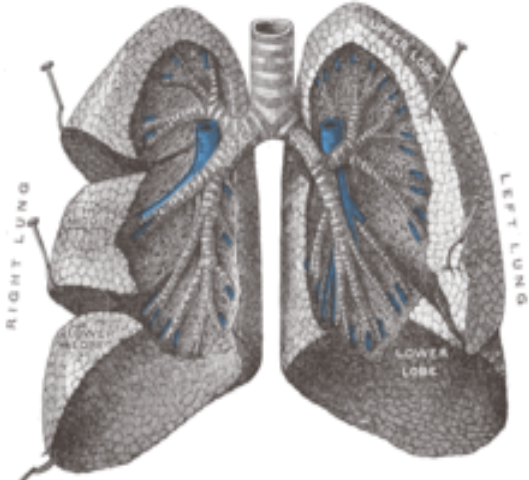
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WHAT IS COPD?

The Canadian Lung Association describes Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) as a disease that makes it hard to move air into and out of your lungs. Some people suffer from either chronic bronchitis, emphysema, or both.

CHRONIC BRONCHITIS is inflammation of the airways. Glands in the airways produce extra mucus that blocks the airways. As a result you cough, expectorate and work hard to breathe.

EMPHYSEMA occurs when the air pockets in the lung are damaged. The lung loses its elasticity. As a result, air is trapped in the lungs. This causes you to struggle to catch a breath.



WHAT TO EXPECT IN HOSPITAL?

If you have a flare-up of your COPD and you come to the Emergency Department, you may require treatment in hospital. A team of health care providers will provide the support and treatment you need.

The team will assess, plan and evaluate the care and treatment you will need. They will help you with setting goals and expectations for your hospital stay. The primary goal is to keep your lungs working as well as possible and that you remain as independent as possible.

Some of these persons may be a:

Doctor – oversees and manages your care

Nurse - administers the treatment and monitors your care

Respiratory therapist - performs testing of lung function, assesses oxygen need and will help teach how to use your medication (inhalers) properly.

Physiotherapist - teaches you breathing exercises, techniques to assist you in clearing mucous from your lungs, and helps you with your mobility.

Occupational therapist – teaches you ways to remain independent in everyday activities

Dietitian – helps you maintain proper nutrition

Case Manager / Discharge Planner – assists with discharge plans

Community Care Access Centre case manager (CCAC) – co-ordinates your care at home



Diagnostic Tests That May Be Ordered By Your Doctor:

Oximetry – is how we check the oxygen level in your blood. This is done by placing a small probe on your finger.

Arterial Blood Gas (ABG) is a special blood test that tells us more detail about your oxygen level and your breathing.

Spirometry – tells us how much air you can blow out of your lungs and how fast you can blow that air out.

Electrocardiogram (ECG) shows us the electrical activity of your heart

Chest X-Ray provides a picture of your lungs

Blood tests give us information about your blood cells

Walk test – is a 6 minute walking test to check your oxygen need while you walk. It also checks your capacity for exercise.



Medications

There are various types of medications that may be ordered to treat COPD.

Some of these might be:

Bronchodilators - help to relax and open your airways to allow more air in and out

Inhaled Steroids - treat the airway swelling and can help your breathing

Oral Steroids - a 2 week course can help eliminate a flare-up

Antibiotics - can be used for treating an infection caused by bacteria.

Oxygen - to raise the blood oxygen

Your medication may be given in different ways. Some of these include:

- ❖ MDI (metered dose inhaler), turbuhalor, diskus, handihaler
- ❖ Spacing device – a plastic holding chamber that makes it easier to use an MDI
- ❖ Nebulizer – is a wet mist of medication that you breathe in from a mask.
- ❖ Intravenous (IV) – a small catheter that is put into your vein to give you fluids or medications

In order for the medications to work properly, you must take them as instructed, even when you are feeling better.

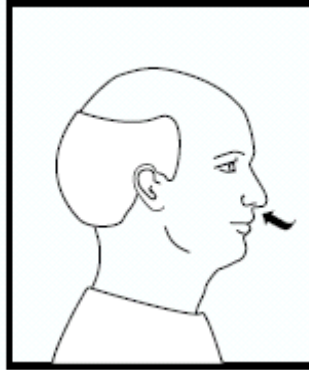
The most effective treatment intervention to prevent progression of COPD is to quit smoking. Your health care team is able to provide more information on resources available to assist you with this decision.

Breathing Exercises

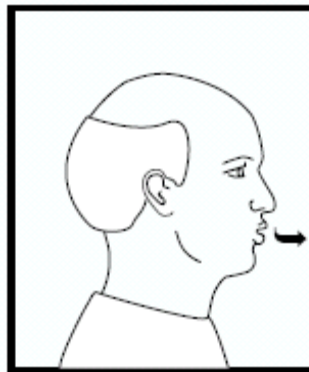
A physiotherapist will introduce you to breathing exercises. As you feel better, you will be encouraged to move and get up out of bed.

Pursed Lip breathing works when you find it hard to breathe. Learn this now so you won't panic when you feel short of breath.

1. Breathe in slowly through your nose for 2 counts.
2. Purse your lips as if you were going to whistle.



3. Breathe out gently through pursed lips for 4 slow counts. (Exhale twice as slowly as you inhale)



4. Let the air escape naturally. Do not force the air out of your lungs.
5. Keep doing pursed lips breathing until you are not short of breath.

Coping with being Short of Breath

- Find a relaxing position that is most comfortable for you. Do not worry about how fast you are breathing.
- Breathe in through your mouth and out through your mouth
- Begin to **lengthen** the time you breathe out
- Try to breathe in through your mouth and out through **pursed lips**
- Breathe in through your nose and out through **pursed lips**
- Start **diaphragmatic breathing** and continue to breathe out through **pursed lips**
- Continue until you feel more **relaxed**.

Maximizing Your Energy for Daily Activity

Occupational therapists are concerned with how people can manage coping in their day to day activities in the areas of SELF-CARE, PRODUCTIVITY and LEISURE.

Maximizing Your Energy

- ✓ **What:** During and after a COPD exacerbation you may find that you tire more easily and become more short of breath than you did previously. Slight changes in your activities can help you have energy for things you “want” to do, rather than just for things you “have” to do on a daily or weekly basis.
- ✓ **Why:** During an exacerbation, your lungs may be working harder to take in oxygen. You may be experiencing reduced oxygen levels in your blood which in turn provides less oxygen to the body. As a result you feel short of breath and fatigued.
- ✓ **How:** Rather than avoid the activities that cause you fatigue or shortness of breath, try to change HOW you go about them so that you reduce the strain placed on your heart and lungs

These hints will help you maximize your energy when you are discharged home:

Think and Plan Ahead

- Ask yourself: Is this task necessary, does it really need to be done? If the answer is “YES”, then ask;
 - Can someone help me?
 - Must I do it all at once?
 - Can all or part of the activity be eliminated?
 - Can any of the activity be simplified?
- Creating a daily/weekly timetable can help with planning ahead.
- When planning each day’s activities, try to be flexible enough to accommodate for “good and bad” days.
- Space out and plan your daily activities. Allow lots of time to finish each task so that you don’t have to rush at the last minute.
- Save repeated trips by organizing things, such as what needs to be taken upstairs or downstairs and then do it in one trip.

Pace Yourself:

- A slow steady rate of work with short rest periods will get the job done without tiring. Plan for twice as long as you think it will take to complete the task.
- Do not push yourself to finish a task when you are tired. Taking short breaks during the task is better and you will spend less time resting and feel less fatigued.
- Avoid last minute rushes!
- Alternate heavy and light tasks throughout the day.
- Spread household chores over the week.

Modify Your Routines Gradually:

- Start with lighter activities at first, taking breaks as needed. Introduce new activities, one or two at a time, doing a little more each day.
- If a change in routine brings unwanted symptoms that day or the next, do a bit less for a day or two.
- Do harder tasks in the part of the day when you have the energy.

Limit Heavy Lifting

- Divide laundry, garbage or groceries into smaller piles. Use a wagon or a cart. Slide rather than lift an object.

Limit Bending & Reaching

- Keep frequently used items within reach. Long handled tools are available to reduce bending and reaching. Hand held showers make showering and clean up easier.
- Put on socks and shoes by crossing your legs to reach your feet rather than bending over to the floor...this provides better posture and breathing patterns

Sit Down

- Sitting while dressing, preparing meals, and showering can reduce the work and strain of the heart and lungs by 25%. Shower chairs are available for purchase or rental at local home health or medical equipment stores.

Avoid Straining and Remember to Breathe!!

- Some people hold their breath during effort and this puts strain on the heart and lungs. Try to remember to breath out during effort, this includes straining on the toilet or opening a stuck door or window.
- If you find rising from the toilet difficult, a higher toilet seat may help.

Also ...

Be realistic: Don't expect too much of yourself and don't be afraid to say "NO" when you have taken on too much.

Cope with stress: Prolonged stress lowers the body's resistance to infection. Uncontrolled stress increases breathing rate and can interfere with oxygen exchange in the lungs.

Deep breathing: Deep breathing is a basic technique that is a component of other relaxation skills. It is the most energy efficient way to breathe. It can be done anywhere, anytime. Taking the time to learn this technique can help you cope with your shortness of breath.

Remember....

- ✓ By saving energy while you perform necessary activities (e.g. dressing, bathing, working), you will have the energy to take part in more enjoyable activities (e.g. socializing, exercising, hobbies).
- ✓ Time and effort are required to break habits and develop new ones that include pacing and energy conservation techniques.

The best advice is to LISTEN TO YOUR BODY. Rest if you become tired and use the suggestions in this booklet to help you get back into daily living.

Some people with lung disease have a permanent reduction of endurance to which they must adapt. If you feel you require help using these energy conservation strategies, consider asking to be referred to an occupational therapist in the community.



Diet and Nutrition Tips

Eating a healthy diet can help:

1. strengthen the respiratory system
2. heal and repair body tissue
3. prevent infection
4. reduce the side effects of certain medications
5. improve your ability to exercise

Follow Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating (CFGHE) to keep you well nourished.

5 -12 servings of Grain Products/day

- ✓ *Healthiest choices:* high fibre grain products (i.e. high fibre cereals, whole grain breads, brown rice, whole wheat pasta)

5 -10 servings of Vegetables and Fruit/day

- ✓ *Healthiest choices:* raw, frozen or canned (drain and rinse) vegetables and fruit

2 - 4 servings of Milk Products/day

- ✓ *Healthiest choices:* lower fat milk products (i.e. 1% milk, low fat yogurt, low fat cheese)

2 - 3 servings of Meat and Alternatives/day

- ✓ *Healthiest choices:* lean red meats, poultry (without skin), fish and seafood, beans, legumes, nuts, tofu

For a copy of CFGHE you can ask your Dietitian, contact your public health unit, or download a copy from Health Canada (www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index_e.html)

Underweight / Malnourished

If you are underweight and malnourished, this can increase the risk of getting lung infections and also make you feel tired.

Tips to gain weight / improve your nutrition:

- Choose beverages that contain calories more often
- Choose high calorie and/or high protein foods
- Try more frequent meals
- Eat more when your appetite is good
- Try meal replacement supplements (i.e. Ensure, Boost, Carnation Breakfast Anytime) if you are unable to eat enough food. You can find meal replacement supplements at grocery stores and pharmacies.

Overweight

If you are overweight, this can make your heart and lungs work harder to supply oxygen to all the areas of your body. Losing weight can help can help you breath easier and feel more energetic.

Tips to lose weight:

- Choose the lower range of food servings from CFGHE
- Limit intake of beverages high in calories (i.e. soft drinks, fruit drinks, juices and other sugary beverages)
- Choose foods low in sugar and fat (see: "*Healthiest choices*" from CFGHE above)
- Limit added sugar and fat (i.e. butter, oils, sugar, syrup, honey)
- Choose high fibre foods (i.e. high fibre grain products, fruits and vegetables)
- Eat 3 meals per day
- Eat until you are only $\frac{3}{4}$ full at meals
- Don't eat when you are not hungry

Salt

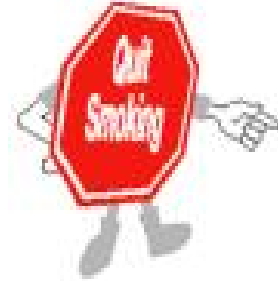
A salt reduced diet is recommended if you have high blood pressure or you are retaining fluid. To reduce your salt intake, avoid added salt (i.e. salt shaker) and limit foods high in salt. Try flavouring foods with herbs and spices as an alternative to salt.

Gas and Bloating

If you are having problems with gas and bloating, try limiting gas-producing foods in your diet to see if this helps (i.e. beans, legumes, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, onions, peppers). Also, avoid swallowing excess air (i.e. avoid carbonated beverages, gulping food, drinking through a straw, chewing gum, sucking on candy).

Patient's Responsibility

- ✓ Know your medication (inhalers) by name and know how to use them
- ✓ Adopt a smoking cessation plan
- ✓ Practice energy conservation
- ✓ Practice good nutrition
- ✓ Actively participate in discharge planning
- ✓ Attend scheduled follow up appointments



Your Life Plan

Although COPD can not be cured, it can be managed. There may come a time when your focus will be on quality of life and on reducing shortness of breath. That is the opportune time to consider your life plans. Your family will appreciate knowing in advance what your wishes are for treatment in the event that you are unable to make treatment decisions for yourself.

Your health care team will be happy to assist you with further information on establishing Advanced Directives and appointing Power of Attorney for Personal Care.

☑ REMEMBER: Quitting smoking is the most important intervention to prevent progression of COPD. .

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I RETURN HOME?

WHAT IF I NEED OXYGEN AT HOME?

You will only need oxygen replacement if your oxygen level is below a certain level.

Oxygen is like a medication. Your doctor will prescribe it as necessary. Sometimes you may need oxygen for a short period of time and other times oxygen may be needed for a longer term.

This will be determined by your doctor.

HNHB Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) In-Home Services

Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant (HNHB) Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) Niagara Branch provides community health, support and placement services. A CCAC Case Manager will meet with you to establish eligibility for receiving service.

Once eligibility criteria is determined the CCAC Case Manager will meet with you to discuss specific needs and co-ordinate an appropriate service plan for both professional and support services.

Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant
Community Care Access Centre

CCAC

CASC

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de Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant

WHAT CAN I DO TO PREVENT FLARE-UPS?

A 'flare-up' is a worsening of COPD symptoms or the development of new symptoms. Increased breathlessness and cough are often the main signs that a flare-up is happening.

Take good care of yourself. Some suggestions are:

- Take your medications as prescribed. Inhalers are medication.
- Adopt a smoking cessation plan
- Practice good nutrition
- Get enough exercise and sleep
- If possible avoid being with people who are sick
- Wash your hands regularly throughout the day
- Schedule an annual 'flu shot'
- Attend all scheduled appointments



A change in the usual color of your sputum could be a sign of a 'flare-up'.

Remember That It's Not Too Late to Quit Smoking Now



Please use this space for any questions you may think of and want to ask

Acknowledgements

This handout has been compiled by a multidiscipline working group from the Niagara Health System and HNHB Community Care Access Centre Niagara Branch

We gratefully acknowledge contributions from the Canadian Lung Association, Calgary Health Region Patient Education Material, Boehringer Ingelheim Canada and Pfizer's "Living Well with COPD series" and Pritchett & Hull Associates, Inc. "To Air Is Human".

Illustrations courtesy of the Calgary Health Region.

Additional Information available:

- ✓ Maximizing Your Energy For Daily Activity - Niagara Health System pamphlet
- ✓ The BreathWorks Plan – from the Lung Association
 - P**revent the Progression
 - R**elieve Your Symptoms
 - I**mprove Your Health and Ability to be Physically Active
 - M**anage Your COPD by Preventing & Treating Flare-ups
 - E**stablish Your COPD Team
- ✓ Living Well with COPD Patient Education Tools – from website www.livingwellwithcopd.com
 1. Keeping a Healthy and Fulfilling Lifestyle
 2. Preventing Your Symptoms and Taking Your Medications
 3. Managing Your Breathing and Saving Your Energy
 4. Integrating a Plan of Action into Your Life
 5. Long-term Home Oxygen Therapy
 6. Managing Stress and Anxiety
- ✓ Get On Track – Self Help Manual – by The Lung Association 1-888-566-5864

Discharge Follow Up Plan

This checklist is a guide to preparing you for discharge early in your hospital stay so that your return to home is as smooth as possible. Various care providers such as a nurse, doctor, discharge planner, physiotherapist, may use this guide. All boxes will not necessarily be related to your situation. Please do not hesitate to ask any of your care providers if you have any questions.

Activities of Daily Living:

- requires assistance but patient ready to be managed at home
- independent

Mobility:

- If previously ambulatory - able to walk across the room
- able to manage at level of mobility as pre-hospital
- If not previously ambulatory - able to manage at level of mobility as pre-hospital status

Knowledge of Medication / Symptom Management

- Patient /care giver demonstrates knowledge of proper use of medications/ inhalers
- Patient /care giver can manage medication regime
- Patient /care giver demonstrates knowledge of energy saving techniques
- Patient /care giver understands signs and symptoms of 'flare-ups', and understands impact of lifestyle decisions such as smoking
 - aware of cessation programs
- New to home oxygen therapy – oxygen vendor has been contacted
 - oxygen set up will be ready on the day of discharge

Referral To CCAC made

- Personal Care
- Transfers / Assistive Devices
- Mobility / Assistive Devices
- Medication Management and teaching
- Symptom Management and teaching