

COPD Flare-Up Warning Signs

Know when a usual cough or breathlessness is becoming an exacerbation

Possible flare-up signs

- Breathlessness worse than your usual baseline.
- More cough or sputum than usual.
- Change in sputum colour or thickness.
- Wheeze, chest tightness, fever or reduced activity tolerance.
- Needing rescue inhaler more often than usual.

Reduce risk

- Use inhalers with correct technique.
- Avoid tobacco smoke and indoor air pollution.
- Take vaccines recommended for you.
- Follow pulmonary rehabilitation/activity advice when available.

Severe breathlessness at rest, bluish lips, confusion, drowsiness, chest pain or inability to speak normally needs emergency care.

Important: This resource is for general education and does not replace an individual medical consultation. Seek urgent medical care for severe, rapidly worsening or emergency symptoms.