

## COPD Rescue Kit\* Education Plan

**\*This kit is for future flare-ups.** I should not use the medicine in the COPD rescue kit in place of the medicine my provider prescribes for me to daily treat my COPD. Use the medicines prescribed to you at discharge.

**By the time I leave the hospital I will be able to show or tell the staff:**

1. What a COPD flare up (exacerbation) is.
2. When to use my COPD rescue kit.
3. How to use the medicines and COPD action plan in the COPD rescue kit.
4. Who I need to alert if I need to use my COPD rescue kit.

**The staff will use three questions to teach me about my COPD Rescue Kit:**

1. What is my main problem?
2. What do I need to do?
3. Why is this important to me?

The staff will ask me to repeat back important points in my own words or ask me to show what I have learned. They want to make sure that I know about my medicines and how to take them safely and correctly.

**What is my main problem?**

I have Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). Sometimes, I may have symptoms of a flare up. A flare up is a change from my normal condition. These symptoms may include:

- feeling more breathless than normal.
- more coughing than normal.
- increased or change in mucus that is coughed up.
- feeling as if I am catching a cold.
- having a low-grade fever.

Flare up treatment includes medicines in the COPD rescue kit:

- Prednisone: Steroid treatment to reduce inflammation.
- Albuterol inhaler: quick-reliever inhaler to open my airways.
- The kit also includes a spacer and a COPD action plan.
- This kit is only to be used with future flare-ups. I should continue my currently prescribed medicine.
- I will store my kit in a safe and cool place until it is needed.

The medicine in the COPD rescue kit DOES NOT replace my current controller medicines that were prescribed by my primary care provider.

**What do I need to do?**

1. I will recognize signs of a flare up (exacerbation) as described in the YELLOW ZONE of the COPD ACTION PLAN.

- I have a low grade fever.
- I am using my rescue inhaler with little relief.
- My cough is more frequent.
- My mucus is increasing in amount or thickness.
- I am more tired and have trouble sleeping.
- I have new or more ankle swelling.
- I am more breathless than normal.
- I don't feel like eating.

2. If my symptoms are in the YELLOW ZONE, I will take the following actions:

- Call my primary care provider and request the next appointment. Let them know that I have started using my COPD Rescue Kit. Make sure I am seen within 24-48 hours.
- Start taking the Prednisone 20 mg. Take 2 tablets (40 mg) by mouth once daily with food until gone (5 days).
- Start using my Albuterol (quick relief) inhaler with spacer device: 2 puffs every 4 hours while awake as needed for shortness of breath. The spacer makes it easier to get the medicine into my lungs.
- This kit is to be used after my usual maintenance inhalers and other medicines have been used but I am in the yellow zone.

3. Prednisone can make my blood sugar increase.

- If I take medicine to control my blood sugar and my blood sugar level is higher than my normal level, I will call my provider.
- If I do not take medicine to control my blood sugar, my blood sugar may be higher than normal. If it is higher, I might:
  - Be very thirsty
  - Need to urinate often
  - Feel weak or tired
  - Have muscle cramps
  - Feel dizzy
  - Be sick to my stomach
  - Have blurry vision
  - Have a headache
  - Be grouchy
- I will call my provider if I have these warning signs.

**Keep track of when I take these medicines below (write in the time):**

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Prednisone Once daily					

**Keep track of when I take these medicines below (write in the time):**

Albuterol	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
May take every 4 hours while awake					

**Why is this important to me?**

It is important to recognize the early signs of a flare up. By catching a flare up early, I may be able to stop it from getting worse.

## COPD Rescue Kit Education Plan

### Teaching Tools

- COPD rescue kit
- [COPD Exacerbation \(elsevier.com\)](#)
- [How to Use an Inhaler \(elsevier.com\)](#)
- [MDI Education Plan](#)
- [COPD Education plan](#)

### References:

COPD Foundation. (n.d.). *COPD Foundation Educational Materials*. Retrieved September 28, 2021, from <https://www.copdfoundation.org/Learn-More/Educational-Materials-Resources/Downloads.aspx>

Lareau, S., Moseson, E., & Slatore, C. G. (2018). *ATS patient education: Exacerbation of COPD*. *ATS Journals*.  
<https://www.atsjournals.org/doi/pdf/10.1164/rccm.19811P21>

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Always close each teaching session with the question, “What questions do you have for me?”

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