



Aides in Respiration (AIR) Health Coaching Study

Action Plan for Patients with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

Background and Description

The Aides in Respiration (AIR) Study COPD Action Plan was developed as a part of our randomized controlled trial (RCT) of health coaching for patients with COPD. It is a document to educate people with COPD on how to recognize and self-manage COPD exacerbations, including when to seek urgent medical care.

Instructions

The COPD Action Plan is a tool for discussion between a health coach and patient. The action plan promotes symptom awareness and timely action when faced with the symptoms of an exacerbation. Because many patients are reluctant to seek emergency care when they are feeling poorly, we have provided tips on how to start the conversation at a time when the patient is feeling well and how to explore past experiences and attitudes toward care seeking. The form provides space for a clinician to recommend additional actions at each level of symptoms, such as what to do when waiting for an ambulance, or standing orders for oral steroids or antibiotics for less severe exacerbations.

UCSF Center for Excellence in Primary Care

The Center for Excellence in Primary Care (CEPC) identifies, develops, tests, and disseminates promising innovations in primary care to improve the patient experience, enhance population health and health equity, reduce the cost of care, and restore joy and satisfaction in the practice of primary care. To learn more about the AIR COPD Study, or for information about health coach training for your staff, please visit us at <https://cepc.ucsf.edu/>.

Acknowledgments

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Green Zone: I am doing well today	Actions
<p>These things are the same as they usually are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shortness of breath • Activity and exercise level • Amounts of cough and phlegm/mucus <i>and</i> • I am sleeping well at night • My appetite is normal for me 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Take daily controller medications and rescue inhaler as prescribed  <input type="checkbox"/> Use oxygen if prescribed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use pursed lip breathing  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prevent lung infections by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good hand washing • Avoiding sick people • Getting your flu shot and pneumonia vaccine 
Yellow Zone: I am having a bad day or a COPD flare	Actions
<p>If any of these symptoms <u>start:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have less energy for my daily activities • My symptoms keep me up at night • My appetite is worse • I feel like I have a chest cold • My medicine is not helping  <p>If any of these symptoms are <u>worse or more than usual:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shortness of breath • Coughing • Phlegm or mucus • Use of rescue inhaler/nebulizer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continue daily controller medications, and oxygen, if prescribed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use rescue inhaler/nebulizer every _____ hours <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If you are not feeling back in the Green Zone after 1-2 hours, call the clinic or Nurse Advice Line today _____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Get plenty of rest <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use pursed lip breathing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Avoid cigarette smoke, inhaled irritants
Red Zone: I need immediate medical care	Actions
<p>If you have <u>ANY</u> of these symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe shortness of breath even at rest • Not able to do any activity because of breathing • Coughing up blood • Not able to sleep because of breathing • Fever or shaking chills • Feeling confused or very drowsy • Chest pains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Call 911 or go to emergency room immediately  <input type="checkbox"/> While getting help, do the following: _____

Ways to have a conversation with patients about the COPD Action Plan

- **Think about the last time you had to go to the emergency room**
 - What made you go in?
 - How long had it been since your symptoms started before you sought care? When did the first symptoms or change actually start?
 - Next time, if you call your doctor when your symptoms start, you might not have to go to the emergency room.

- **Play “Exacerbation Detective”**
 - Think back to what might have caused those symptoms to start. Sometimes it won’t be possible to tell, but if you can identify what triggered your flare, you can better avoid that trigger in the future.
 - Were you smoking more?
 - Were you stressed?
 - Did someone around you have a cold or flu?
 - Did you try a new cleaning chemical?

- **Is there any symptom in the yellow zone that surprises you or that you don’t agree with?**
 - Would you call your doctor if you experienced it? Why or why not?

- **Chest colds are much more of a problem for people with COPD than for people who don’t have breathing problems.**
 - Germs love mucus! The longer mucus stays in your lungs, the more likely it is that you will get very sick.
 - If you let your doctor treat your chest cold early on, you will feel better faster.

- **Very serious COPD flares can cause PERMANENT damage to your lungs and can be LIFE-THREATENING.**
 - By acting in the yellow zone, you have a better chance of that not happening.
 - Weigh the benefits of getting help (preventing lung damage, living longer, feeling better) with the cons (inconvenience).

- **What are some reasons you wouldn’t seek help in an exacerbation?**
 - Are these reasons as important to you as the benefits listed above?