



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's 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

The COPD Action plan is adapted from a tool from the American Lung Association. The UCSF Center for Excellence in Primary Care would like to acknowledge the following individuals for their contribution to this work: Rachel Willard-Grace MPH; David Thom MD, PhD, MPH; Stephanie Tsao, NP; George Su, MD; Denise De Vore; Beatrice Huang; Chris Chirinos; and Jessica Wolf.



Copyright 2017, The Regents of the University of California Created by UCSF Center for Excellence in Primary Care. All rights reserved. Individuals may photocopy these materials for educational, not-for-profit uses, provided that the contents are not altered and that attribution is given to the UCSF Center for Excellence in Primary Care. These materials may not be used for commercial purposes without the written permission of the Center for Excellence in Primary Care.

COPD Action Plan for _____ Date reviewed with provider: _____

Green Zone: I am doing well today	Actions
These things are the same as they usually are:	☒ Take daily controller medications and rescue inhale as prescribed
• Shortness of breath	☐ Use oxygen if prescribed
• Activity and exercise level	☒ Use pursed lip breathing
• Amounts of cough and phlegm/mucus and	☒ Prevent lung infection by
• I am sleeping well at night	• Good hand washing
• My appetite is normal for me	• Avoiding sick people
	• Getting your flu shot and pneumonia vaccine

Yellow Zone: I am having a bad day or a COPD flare	Actions
If any of these symptoms start :	☒ Continue daily controller medications, and oxygen, if prescribed
• I have less energy for my daily activities	☒ Use rescue inhaler/nebulizer every ____ hours
• My symptoms keep me up at night	☐
• My appetite is worse	
• I feel like I have a chest cold	
• My medicine is not helping	
If any of these symptoms are worse or more than usual :	☒ If you are not feeling back in Green Zone after 1-2 hours, call the clinic or Nurse Advice Line today
• Shortness of breath	☒ Get plenty of rest
• Coughing	☒ Use pursed lip breathing
• Phlegm or mucus	☒ Avoid cigarette smoke, inhaled irritants
• Use of rescue inhaler/nebulizer	

Red Zone: I need immediate medical care	Actions
If you have ANY of these symptoms:	☒ Call 911 or go to emergency room immediately
• Severe shortness of breath even at rest	☐ While getting help, do the following:
• 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	

This COPD Action plan was adapted from the COPD Action Plan of the American Lung Association. To view the original tool, visit <http://www.lung.org/lung-disease/copd/awareness/copd-action-plan-generic.pdf>

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?

This COPD Action plan was adapted from the COPD Action Plan of the American Lung Association. To view the original tool, visit <http://www.lung.org/lung-disease/copd/awareness/copd-action-plan-generic.pdf>