COPD Rescue Pack

Patient Information Leaflet

Red Kite Pharmacy Team – Updated 2025

IMPORTANT:
If you are severely breathless, develop chest pain, or feel very unwell:

CALL 999 IMMEDIATELY.

What is a Rescue Pack?

A COPD rescue pack contains steroids and antibiotics to help manage a flare-up (exacerbation) early and prevent hospital admission.
Use only when advised by a healthcare professional and when specific symptoms arise.

What should I do if I feel more short of breath than usual?

- Rest and avoid strenuous activity
- Continue your usual inhalers as prescribed
- Use your reliever inhaler (e.g. salbutamol) more often if needed
- Stay hydrated (avoid alcohol)
- Monitor your symptoms

When should I start the medication in the pack?

1. Steroids (Prednisolone)

Start if you have 2 or more of the following for over 24 hours:
- Worsening breathlessness
- Increased cough or sputum (phlegm)
- Faster breathing or wheezing

How to take: Take six prednisolone 5mg tablets (30mg) once daily in the morning for 5 days.

✔ Do not stop early unless advised

✔ Do not exceed 5 days without GP advice

2. Antibiotics
Start only if:
- Your phlegm becomes green or yellow
AND
- You feel more unwell or have a fever

How to take: Follow the instructions on the label. Complete the full course even if you feel better.

What next?
Call the GP Surgery Pharmacy Team on the next working day after starting your rescue pack.

Important Reminders
- Do not use rescue packs regularly without review
- Always tell your healthcare team when you've used your pack
- Store safely, out of reach of children

Want to prevent flare-ups?
You can reduce flare-ups by adopting a healthy lifestyle. This includes:
- Stopping smoking
- Staying physically active
- Eating a healthy, balanced diet
- Following your COPD management plan
- Attending your annual reviews

For more advice, visit: https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/chronic-obstructive-pulmonary-disease-copd/living-with/