

Appendix D: COPD Flare-up Action Plan

Patient Name: _____ Date: _____

An action plan is a contract between you and your doctor about how you will manage your COPD flare-ups. The goal of this action plan is to quickly detect and treat COPD flare-ups.

Especially watch for a COPD flare-up when:

1. You get a cold or flu.
2. You feel run down or tired.
3. You are exposed to air pollution.
4. After weather changes.
5. When your mood changes; such as feeling down or anxious.

If you have 1 or more of the following symptoms for 1 to 2 days you are having a COPD flare-up:

1. Increased shortness of breath compared to normal.
2. Increased amounts of cough and sputum from normal.
3. Your sputum changes from its normal colour to a yellow, green or rust colour.

YOUR ACTION PLAN

When you have a COPD flare-up, do the following:

(Your doctor will check your action items)

- ☐ Call your family doctor immediately for a check up and medicine
- ☐ Take your prescribed prednisone for a COPD flare-up and finish the prescription
- ☐ Take your prescribed antibiotic for a COPD flare-up and finish the prescription
- ☐ Take 2 - 4 puffs of your blue rescue inhaler, 4 to 6 times per day for shortness of breath
- ☐ Other _____

If after taking the above action, your symptoms do not improve in 48 hours, seek medical care immediately.

If you are extremely breathless, anxious, panicky, confused, agitated, fearful or drowsy, call 911 for an ambulance to take you to the emergency room.

When you have a COPD flare-up

1. Start your action plan as instructed by your doctor.
2. If you do not feel better after 48 hours, or if you are getting worse at any time, get medical attention right away.
3. Book an appointment to see your doctor to get COPD flare-up prescription refills.

This action plan is for COPD flare ups only

There are other reasons you may get shortness of breath such as heart problems or pneumonia. If you develop shortness of breath and symptoms not mentioned on page 1 (abnormal shortness of breath, more cough and sputum, coloured sputum), see a doctor.

Antibiotic Rotation

After a COPD flare-up, a different antibiotic may need to be prescribed for your next flare-up. Help your doctor do this by keeping track of the name of the antibiotic, and when you started taking it for each COPD flare-up.

Bring this information with you to your doctor appointments.

Antibiotic Name				
Date Antibiotic Taken				