

## > What is COPD?

COPD stands for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease. It is a condition where your airways are inflamed and narrowed, making it harder for you to breathe. It also causes damage to air sacs in the lungs.

## > What are the causes?

- Smoking is the main cause of COPD. Smoking irritates and inflames the lungs which results in scarring.
- Work environments involving exposure to harmful substances such as smoke, fumes, dust and chemicals.
- Genetic disorders, although this is rare.

## > What are the symptoms?

- Breathlessness, especially when walking, due to less oxygen reaching the lungs.
- Persistent, chesty cough.
- Wheeze or a tight chest.
- Coughing up a lot of phlegm (regular sputum production).
- Frequent chest infections, especially during the winter.

## > What about my medicines?

The aim of COPD medication is to slow the progression of the disease, improve your symptoms and make breathing easier.

- Take your medicine as prescribed, even if you feel better.
- Read the patient information leaflet that comes with your medicines to learn more about your medication.
- Speak to your GP or healthcare team if you have any concerns or if your symptoms become worse.

## Self Care Tips

- Stop Smoking to prevent further damage to your lungs and slow your disease progression.
- Attend pulmonary rehabilitation. This is a specialised programme of exercise and education that provides:
  - Physical exercise tailored to your needs and ability
  - Psychological and emotional support
- Avoid temperatures that are too hot or too cold.
- Have your yearly flu vaccination.
- Have regular check-ups with your GP.

### References

NHS Condition: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/asthma/>

British Lung Foundation <https://www.blf.org.uk/support-for-you/copd>

To contact Bromley Well call the Single Point of Access on **0808 278 7898** or Lifestyle Support on **07985 444210 / 07985 433045** Email [enquiry@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:enquiry@bromleywell.org.uk) [www.bromleywell.org.uk](http://www.bromleywell.org.uk)



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> Further resources and services

**British Lung Foundation**

73-75 Goswell Road, London

EC1V 7ER

Tel: 0300 0030 555

[www.blf.org.uk](http://www.blf.org.uk)

A national charity providing information and advice about living with COPD. A really useful website packed with information and advice on everything from quitting smoking to coping in cold weather.

**Breathe Easy Bromley**

Victor Childs Room, St Pauls Church,

Crofton Rd, Orpington, BR6

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of every month from

2pm – 4pm

Tel: 0300 303 0253

Local Support for people living with COPD.

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[NHS Conditions Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease](#)

NHS conditions pages contain information about the causes, symptoms and treatment of COPD and advice for people living with the condition.

[NHS Approved Apps](#)

Link to an NHS approved App, designed to help you manage your condition.

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