

TOP TIPS FOR COPING WITH COPD IN WINTER



PREVENT FLARE UPS LINKED TO WINTER: BE PREPARED FOR BAD WEATHER

- Watch the **weather forecast** to give you advanced warning of cold spells
- **Close your window at night** – breathing in cold air whilst you sleep aggravates the lining of your lungs' airways. Heat your **bedroom at night aiming for 18°C**
- **Heat your rooms** adequately during the day: [Further advice here](#)
- Cover your **mouth and nose with a Scarf** when going out in cold weather to warm air entering the lungs
- Re-order your **regular medication** in plenty of time so you don't run out during times of bad weather and take your regular inhalers and medication as prescribed so that they work effectively
- **Stop Smoking to reduce your risk** of becoming unwell with your COPD and being admitted to hospital during winter. Speak to **your local pharmacist** for support in stopping smoking.

PREVENT INFECTION SPREAD

- **Washing your hands** in soap and water can prevent the spread of bacterial and viral respiratory infections. You can also use **alcohol hand sanitiser**
- Have your **Flu vaccine** yearly and arrange your one-off **Pneumonia vaccine**
- Ensure when **Coughing & sneezing** it is into a tissue, bin it and wash your hands afterwards to reduce spread of infections. It is also sensible to **avoid visits from unwell friends and relatives** to reduce your risk of infection.

RECOGNISE & TREAT FLARE UPS EARLY TO STAY WELL

- If you notice you are **unexplainably much more breathless** than usual, **feeling generally unwell** and are **struggling with your usual daily tasks** because of your breathing you may be starting with a flare-up of your COPD. If these symptoms last more than 2 days you may need a course of steroid tablets.
- If you are **coughing more, bringing up more phlegm** than usual which is **darker than normal** you may need a course of antibiotics to treat an infection.
- **Treating flare-ups and infections promptly** can prevent a severe flare-up that may result in a hospital stay. If you don't have a course of stand-by medication at home as part of a **COPD self-management plan**, speak to your practice nurse or GP about whether this is suitable.
- If you need advice on when to start taking any medication, how to use them or if you are not improving after treatment contact your GP

Further advice can be found the on [British Lung Foundation website](#) or you can phone **03000 030 555**

