

# BORG BREATHLESSNESS SCALE

0	Nothing at all
0.5	Very, very slight (just noticeable)
1	Very slight
2	Slight
3	Moderate
4	Somewhat severe
5	Severe (heavy)
6	
7	Very severe
8	
9	Very, very severe
10	Maximal

## EMERGENCY

If you have any of the following:

Feeling very short of breath

Chest pains

Feelings of drowsiness, agitation, fear or confusion

**Call 999 for an ambulance**

**Or call 111 when it is less urgent than 999**

### References

If you require a full list of references for this leaflet please email [patient.information@ulh.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@ulh.nhs.uk)

The Trust endeavours to ensure that the information given here is accurate and impartial.

If you require this information in another language, large print, audio (CD or tape) or braille, please e-mail the Patient Information team at [patient.information@ulh.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@ulh.nhs.uk)

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## COPD Action Plan

Name: .....

Telephone Contacts:

GP/Surgery: .....

Specialist Nurse: .....

**Your regular COPD medication is:**

**Medicine      Dose      Frequency**

Medicine	Dose	Frequency

# GREEN



When you are well, you should take note of the following:

- How much sputum (phlegm) you have;
- What colour your sputum is;
- What activities are normal for you each day;
- How breathless normal daily activities make you (use the Borg Scale).

Try to keep well by:

- Stopping smoking and avoiding smoky places;
- Eating a healthy diet;
- Doing regular exercise or ask your GP to refer you for a course of pulmonary rehabilitation;
- Drinking plenty of fluids – 8 glasses a day unless advised not to by your doctor;
- Always taking your inhalers and medications as prescribed;
- Keeping warm in cold weather;
- Avoiding people with infections;
- Keeping your flu and pneumonia vaccinations up to date.

# AMBER



If your symptoms are worsening beyond normal day to day variations:

Are you more breathless or wheezy than usual? (Use the Borg Scale)

- Increase your reliever treatment:  
.....

If your shortness of breath has not improved within 24 hours:

- Take your course of steroid tablets (30mg daily for 7 days);

If you do not have standby medications contact your surgery for a course of antibiotics and steroids and tell them you are having a flare up of COPD;

Check the **thickness** and **amount** of your sputum – is it thicker than normal and is there more sputum than usual? Check the **colour** of your sputum - has your sputum changed colour?

Start taking a full course of antibiotics if your sputum becomes:  
.....

In addition:

- If you use oxygen you may need to use it for longer - check with your specialist nurse or doctor;
- Rest;
- Diet (eat little and often);
- Drinks (keep fluid levels up);
- Breathing exercises;
- If you do not feel any better after 24 to 48 hours or symptoms get worse please **SEEK MEDICAL ADVICE**.

# RED



If your symptoms are much worse than usual seek medical advice urgently.

Take your maximum reliever inhaler dose;

- Start steroid tablets immediately;
- Look out for **DANGER SIGNS** such as:
- High fever
- Chest pains
- Too breathless to speak
- Confusion
- Call **999** or urgent medical support.