

# Living Better Together: Project STRENGTH



Welcome to Project STRENGTH, Support for Transitioning Rehabilitation and Exercise Now Going to Home, resources to help manage your COPD and live a healthier life at home. In each of our packets, we have included some parts of pulmonary rehab and how to improve daily life:

- 1 Information on disease management.
- 2 Keeping up with exercise and activity.
- 3 Symptom control and ways to improve breathing.
- 4 Saving energy in your daily life.

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For more information contact us at [info@resphealth.org](mailto:info@resphealth.org) or 888-880-5864.

## Be a Goal Setter

Why do you want to be healthier?

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How do you manage your COPD now?

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Set specific goals:

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What concrete actions will you take to be healthier?

I will \_\_\_\_\_ so I  
can \_\_\_\_\_

Example: I will do exercises to make me stronger 3-5 times per week over the next 6 months, so I can walk around the block.



# My COPD Profile

Fill this out with your doctor and have them review it with you and/or your caregiver at your next visit. Contact RHA or visit our website for a printable medication tracker.

## About Me:

Name and birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_ My emergency contact is: \_\_\_\_\_ My oxygen flow/needs: \_\_\_\_\_

Pulmonary rehab contact: \_\_\_\_\_ My oxygen provider: \_\_\_\_\_

## My Healthcare Team:

Primary Care Number: \_\_\_\_\_ After Hours Medical Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Lung Specialist Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## My Day Rating:

### Feeling Green

I feel normal: No extra effort to breathe, cough, sleep, eat, or do physical activity.

I should: take usual medicines, continue oxygen if used, exercise and eat normally, avoid lung irritants, and stay inside on bad air days.

### Feeling Yellow

I have one or more of these symptoms: more or thicker mucus, feel more tired, more breathless, feel like I have a cold, medicine is not helping.

I should: continue to take my medicines, limit activities, practice pursed lip breathing, let my doctor/team know about my symptoms.

### Feeling Red

I am having a medical emergency: severe breathlessness, I have blue lips or fingers, fever, feeling confused, chest pain, or coughing up blood.

Call 911 and have caregiver call doctor or healthcare team.

## Become a COPD Self-Manager

It is important to manage your COPD to reduce flare-ups. As a self-manager, you can take control of knowing when your symptoms change, what medicines you need to take, what exercises or activities you should do to build your strength, and how to live daily life while saving energy.

## Identify Flare-Up Symptoms

Tracking symptoms is a great tool for spotting a flare-up early. Flare-ups are easier to control when spotted early.

### Signs of a COPD Flare-Up

- An ongoing or more severe cough.
- A cough that produces more than the usual amount of mucus.
- Increased shortness of breath, with physical activity or when resting.
- Wheezing, whistling, or squeaky sounds when breathing.
- Chest tightness.
- Cold or flu-like symptoms.
- Call your doctor or healthcare team if you have any of these symptoms.

### Signs of a COPD Emergency

- It is harder to walk or talk, cannot speak in full sentences.
- Heart beats very fast or irregularly.
- Lips or fingernails turn gray or blue.
- Breathing is fast and hard, even when using COPD medicines.
- Call 911 if you have any of these symptoms.

# Support is Important

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- It helps to feel like you are not alone when managing your health. A group of people can support you, help you reach your goals, and help prevent anxiety and depression. Ask for support from your family and friends and talk to them about how they can help you reach your goals.
- Include other people living with COPD in your support group as well. Building a circle of people living with COPD can help everyone learn ways of managing COPD and decrease feeling lonely. If you have a caregiver, they can also join support groups for caregivers of people with COPD to get added support and tips. COPD and caregiver support groups come in many different forms:

## In Person

Connect through your local hospital or local COPD organizations.

## Virtual Groups

Connect through COPD organizations.

- You can also form your own COPD patient support group! Talk to your doctor or COPD healthcare team about helping you find other people living with COPD.

List the people in your life who are a part of your support group now:

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Who do you want to add to your support group, and how will you add them?

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If you have a COPD patient support group, how often and where do you meet?

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How can a support group help you meet your goals?

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*The information contained in this packet is not intended as a substitute for medical advice.*