

Medications for COPD

Classes of medications	Action	Common side effects	Precautions
Long-term control medications "Preventer"			
Corticosteroids (inhalation) Beclomethasone, Budesonide, Ciclesonide, Fluticasone	Relieve airway inflammation and prevent acute exacerbations of COPD	Dry mouth, hoarseness, sores or white patches in your mouth or throat	Rinse mouth with water after use.
Beta-agonists (Long-acting inhaler) Salmeterol, Formoterol, Vilanterol, Indacaterol, Olodaterol	Dilate the airway and prevent acute exacerbations of COPD	Nervousness, headache, muscle cramps, tremors	Overdose can increase the risks of side effects
Antimuscarinics (Long-acting inhaler) Tiotropium, Glycopyrronium bromide, Acclidinium, Umeclidinium	Dilate the airway and prevent acute exacerbations of COPD	Dry mouth, cough, fever, runny nose, sore throat, breathing problems worsen	Overdose can increase the risks of side effects
Xanthine (Oral) Theophylline	Dilate the airway and prevent acute exacerbations of COPD	Trouble sleeping, nausea, repeated vomiting, headache, restlessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ※ The controlled release formulations of theophylline must not be chewed. ※ Symptoms of overdose may include nausea, severe vomiting, fast heartbeat, seizure and headache etc.
PDE-4 Inhibitor (oral) Roflumilast	Relieve airway inflammation and prevents acute exacerbations of COPD	Diarrhoea, unexplained weight loss, trouble sleeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ※ This medication may cause weight loss. Please monitor your weight regularly while taking this medication. Please inform your doctor if you notice a substantial decline in body weight.
Quick relief medications "Reliever"			
Beta-agonists (Short-acting inhaler) Salbutamol	Rapidly dilate the airway and soothe breathing. Relieve the symptoms during acute exacerbations of COPD	Nervousness, headache, muscle cramps, tremors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ※ Carry with you at all times ※ Overdose can increase the risks of side effects ※ If your symptoms do not subside or worsen after using this inhaler, please seek medical attention immediately. ※ If you need to use this inhaler more frequently than instructed, please check with your healthcare professionals to see if you are using it properly. Please inform your doctor if needed, as it may indicate your condition has not been controlled effectively
Antimuscarinic (short-acting inhaler) Ipratropium	Rapidly dilate the airway and soothe breathing. Relieve the symptoms during acute exacerbations of COPD	Dry mouth, headache, cough, runny nose, sore throat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ※ Overdose can increase the risks of side effects ※ If your symptoms do not subside or worsen after using this inhaler, please seek medical attention immediately. ※ If you need to use this inhaler more frequently than instructed, please check with your healthcare professionals to see if you are using it properly. Please inform your doctor if needed, as it may indicate your condition has not been controlled effectively
Corticosteroid (oral) Prednisolone	Relieve airway inflammation and prevent deterioration during acute exacerbations of COPD	Increased appetite, weight gain, high blood pressure, edema, insomnia, affected mood. Side effects will subside after stop taking the medication.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ※ Taken in the morning with food ※ For short-term use only

※ If you experience sleepiness, dizziness or blurred vision after taking the medications, avoid driving or activities requiring mental alertness or coordination. Avoid alcohol as it may increase the side effects.

※ If you notice any allergic reactions like skin itchiness, face or hand swelling, breathing difficulty etc., consult your doctor immediately.

**? For any query,
please seek advice from your doctor,
pharmacist or other healthcare
professionals.**

Medications for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease



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What is Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease



Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a persistent lung disease characterised by obstruction or narrowing of airway caused by long-term damage to the respiratory system, resulting in difficulties to breathe properly. This causes symptoms such as breathing difficulty, breathlessness and coughing. COPD patients often do not get enough oxygen to maintain normal daily activities. Although there is no cure for COPD, many medications can prevent flare-ups and alleviate the symptoms. Therefore, patients should use the medications as directed.

How is COPD treated



Quit smoking

Smoking cessation can reduce cough and phlegm in COPD patients as well as slow down the disease progression. Patients can receive counseling and / or medication to assist in the cessation of smoking if necessary.

Medical Treatment

The goal of treating COPD is to reduce frequency and severity of exacerbations, improve exercise tolerance, relieve symptoms, prevent disease progression and thereby improve the quality of life. There are two main categories of medications for COPD:

- (i) Long-term control medications “Preventer” – these medications need to be taken on a long-term basis to prevent disease progression and acute exacerbation of COPD. Therefore you have to take the medications regularly even if your condition improves.

- (ii) Quick relief medications “Reliever” – these medications relieve symptoms during acute exacerbation of COPD. Short-acting bronchodilator can quickly relieve symptoms such as breathless and breathing difficulty. However, regular use of long-term COPD control medications will be most effective to prevent acute exacerbations of COPD.

Most medications for COPD are delivered via inhalation, allowing the medications to reach the bronchi directly, rendering rapid therapeutic effect while reducing side effects.

You must learn how to use the inhalers properly. Improper use of inhalers can result in underdosing or overdosing.

Pharmacist's advices

1. To control COPD effectively, you should:
 - Use the medications as directed. Do not stop using the medications or change the dose or frequency unless directed by your doctor.
 - Learn how to use the inhalation medications correctly (please refer to the relevant leaflets).
2. If you have been prescribed with both bronchodilator and corticosteroid inhaler, you should use the bronchodilator first as it helps dilate the airway and allow the corticosteroid to reach the lungs more effectively.
3. If you have history of drug allergy, consult your doctor or pharmacist before using the medications.
4. Tell your doctor and pharmacist if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant or breastfeeding.
5. Consult your doctor before using any other medications, including health supplements, Traditional Chinese Medicine, Proprietary Chinese Medicines and over-the-counter medications.
6. Please consult your doctor or pharmacist if you encounter any difficulties in using the medications.
7. Please consult your doctor if symptoms persist or worsen after using the medications.

What if I miss a dose?

Use the missed dose as soon as you remember. Skip the missed dose if it is almost time for your next scheduled dose.

Do not double the dose.

How to store?

- Store in a cool, dry place and away from direct heat and light.
- Precaution of storage of metered-dose inhaler
 - The metal canister should not be stored separately from the plastic holder.
 - The metal canister contains compressed gas. Do not puncture and keep away from heat to avoid hazard.
- Keep out of reach of children.
- Discard all medications that are expired or no longer required.
- Do not share the medication with other people.