

COPD – Hospital Admission Guidance (Plain Text)

Overview

Hospital admission with a COPD flare-up (exacerbation) can feel worrying or overwhelming. This guidance explains what care you should expect during your hospital stay and after discharge.

When you are admitted to hospital

The healthcare team should provide the following care:

- Steroid tablets within 1 hour of arrival to reduce lung inflammation
- Assessment of how severe your COPD flare-up is
- Review by a respiratory specialist within 24 hours

If you are having difficulty breathing and tests show poor airflow, you may be offered:

- Non-invasive ventilation (NIV)
 - A mask-based treatment that helps move air in and out of your lungs

These steps are important because:

- Steroids support faster recovery
- Assessing severity ensures the right treatment is given

Questions you may wish to ask

- Have I received steroid treatment?
- How severe is my COPD flare-up?
- Have I been reviewed by a respiratory specialist?

During your stay and before discharge

Your healthcare team should:

- Review your inhaler technique
- Review your medications
- Provide or arrange a self-management plan
- Offer smoking cessation support if appropriate
- Assess whether you are suitable for pulmonary rehabilitation
- Provide an emergency medication pack or refer you to a community respiratory team if needed

After you go home

You should receive:

- Follow-up contact within 72 hours (by phone or in person)

This is important to:

- Ensure you continue recovering
- Reduce risk of readmission to hospital