

## Pulmonary Rehabilitation

If you have a chronic respiratory condition you may be eligible to attend pulmonary rehabilitation sessions in the local community. This involves a six week programme (two hours twice per week) of exercise and education about your condition.

Research has shown that this can help improve symptoms of breathlessness, improve quality of life, reduce your risk of hospital admissions and increase your exercise capacity/fitness.

If you wish to find out if you are eligible please **discuss this with your GP or practice nurse.**

## Useful Numbers

<b>COPD Team</b> (Mon-Fri 9-5)	01255 206244
<b>Home Oxygen Service</b> (Mon-Fri 9-5)	01255 206244
<b>BOC</b>	0800 111 333
<b>British Lung Foundation</b> <a href="http://www.blf.org.uk">www.blf.org.uk</a>	0300 0030555
<b>NHS Choices</b> <a href="http://www.nhs.uk">www.nhs.uk</a>	
<b>Ace Lifestyle Service</b> Weight management and increasing physical activity	0800 022 4524
<b>Provide lifestyle service</b> Smoking Cessation	0300 303 9988
<b>Health in mind</b> <a href="http://www.healthmind.org.uk/how-we-can-help">www.healthmind.org.uk/how-we-can-help</a>	0300 330 5455

On request, this publication can be supplied in alternative formats including large print, Braille, audio tape and disk. We can also translate the Information into languages other than English. This publication is also available on our website.

# Taking care of yourself with a long term respiratory condition



**If you have a long term respiratory condition such as asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) it is very important that you take care of yourself, especially over the winter months, as you are at greater risk of developing infections, experiencing a deterioration in your condition and being admitted to hospital.**

The information provided in this leaflet aims to give you advice about the steps you can take in order to keep well.

### **Flu vaccination**

If you have asthma or COPD and you catch the flu you are more at risk of developing complications and becoming seriously unwell. Although flu is around every winter, the virus changes and last year's vaccination will not protect you this year.

The injected flu vaccine is offered free of charge on the NHS to patients with long term respiratory conditions, such as asthma (when treated with an inhaled steroid or tablet steroid, or it has led to hospital admission in the past), COPD, or other chronic lung conditions. Carers of these patients are also eligible to receive the flu vaccine free each winter. The vaccine cannot cause flu as it does not contain any live virus

**If you wish to have a flu vaccination please contact your GP surgery. Free flu vaccinations are also available from some participating pharmacies. Contact your local pharmacy for details.**

### **Pneumococcal Vaccine**

This vaccine protects against pneumococcal infections which can lead to pneumonia, blood poisoning and meningitis. If you suffer from a long term respiratory condition such as COPD you are at greater risk of these kind of infections so we advise you to have the vaccination to protect yourself. You will only need to have the vaccination once and generally this will protect you for life.

If you wish to have the pneumococcal vaccination please **contact your GP surgery.**

### **Are you using your inhaler correctly?**

Using your inhaler correctly is important to ensure you are receiving the inhaled medications prescribed for you. Research has shown up to 90% of patients are not using their inhaler correctly.

If you have not had your inhaler technique assessed recently please **contact your local community pharmacy, community team or practice nurse at your GP surgery.**

### **Have you had an annual review of your asthma/COPD?**

All patients with asthma should have a Personal Asthma Action Plan (PAAP) and should have a review at least annually. Also all patients with COPD should have a management plan and should have a review at least once yearly or more frequently if indicated.

**Please contact your GP surgery if your review is overdue.**

### **Smoking cessation**

There are many benefits to stopping smoking especially if you have a respiratory condition such as asthma or COPD. The support available from the Smoking Cessation Service, in combination with the medication they provide means you are 3 times more likely to increase your chances of quitting.

The Essex Lifestyle Service offers free, 1-2-1 support within the community across Essex for:

- Healthy Eating
- Increasing Physical Activity
- Stopping Smoking
- Managing Long Term Conditions
- Confidence, self-esteem and resilience
- ...and more

If you would like help to stop smoking or have support with general lifestyle changes your GP surgery, pharmacist or community health care team can refer you.

Alternatively you can self-refer at

[www.essexlifestyleservice.org.uk](http://www.essexlifestyleservice.org.uk)

or email at

[PROVIDE.EssexLifestyles@nhs.net](mailto:PROVIDE.EssexLifestyles@nhs.net)

or phone **0300 303 9988** and an adviser will call you back. The Essex Lifestyle Service is open Monday to Friday 8am – 8pm.