



# Learning Modules

# Objectives of COPD Education

To provide care teams knowledge to assess (identify) and manage residents living with COPD. The ultimate goals are to improve resident quality of life and reduce Emergency Room transfers through the reduction of exacerbations and other related complications

Adapted from the program

Living Well **COPD**<sup>™</sup>  
with

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

*A plan of action for life*

*Livingwellwithcopd.com*

# Modules Overview

**Module 1:** What is COPD? *Symptoms, diagnosis and prevention*

**Module 2:** COPD Medications and Treatments

**Module 3:** Medication Techniques and Devices

**Module 4:** Oxygen Therapy for COPD

**Module 5:** Caregiver COPD Action Plan -The resident is feeling well

**Module 6:** Caregiver COPD Action Plan -The resident is feeling unwell

**Module 7:** Caregiver COPD Action Plan -The resident is feeling worse

**Module 8:** End of life care for COPD

# Module 2

## Topic

### COPD Medications and Treatments



# At the end of this module we will ask you:

1. Are most COPD medications inhaled?
2. Do all bronchodilators act quickly?
3. Can both short and long acting bronchodilators be taken on the same day?
4. Which COPD medication must be used in case of emergency (ex: in cases of significant breathlessness or cough)?
5. Should a steroid inhaler be taken before the bronchodilators?

# COPD Medications

- Managing COPD **requires regular use** of medication
- Most **COPD medications are inhaled** and combine with the air breathed into the lungs
- COPD medications can help **improve quality of life** through decreasing symptoms and increasing tolerance during physical activity
- COPD medications may **prevent complications** and lung infections
- COPD medications are most effective when given using the **proper techniques and devices**

# Medication for COPD: Bronchodilators

**Bronchodilators are the most important medication in COPD management**

- They open airways and allow more air to move in and out of the lungs
- They can reduce the feeling of breathlessness
- They may assist in loosening and removing mucous
- They may reduce cough

# Types of Bronchodilators-1

## Short Acting (SA)

- **Fast acting** medication **lasting a short time ( 2-4 hours)**
- Can be taken as needed - up to several times a day
- Open the airways immediately after use (rescue medication)
- Can be combined with Long Acting bronchodilators
- The combination of two different Short Acting bronchodilators is available

# Types of Bronchodilators-2

## Long Acting (LA)

- **Slow acting** medication **lasting a long time (12-24 hours)**
- Intended for treatment maintenance
- Taken once or twice a day
- Reduce breathlessness, disability and exacerbation
- Improve quality of life and quality of sleep
- A combination of two different Long Acting bronchodilators is available and opens airways for 24h (taken only once a day)

# Medication for COPD: Inhaled Anti-Inflammatories

- Inhaled Anti-Inflammatories can only be used in combination with a bronchodilator
- They reduce certain types of inflammation and swelling of the bronchi and open up airways
- They are not used for emergencies
- User must rinse the mouth with water afterward to avoid Thrush in the mouth (candida fungal infection)

# Additional Treatment for When Symptoms Get Worse

- **Antibiotics:** Usually prescribe for short periods to treat an exacerbation-like lung infection, pneumonia, or sinusitis. They can be used with other COPD medications during an exacerbation
- **An Oral Anti-inflammatory (Prednisone):** Usually prescribed for short periods (1-2 weeks) when respiratory symptoms get worse and do not improve with maintenance medication
- **Oxygen:** A prescription of oxygen may help improve breathlessness. *Warning:* Not all people who are breathless needs oxygen. In fact, if you increase the oxygen in someone who doesn't need it, it can have the opposite effect (see Module 4)

## Now we ask you:

1. Are most COPD medications inhaled? *Yes.*
2. Do all bronchodilators act quickly? *No.*
3. Can both short and long acting bronchodilators can be taken on the same day? *Yes.*
4. Which COPD medication must be used in case of emergency (ex: persistent breathlessness or cough)? *Short acting bronchodilators that act quickly.*
5. Should steroid inhaler be taken before the bronchodilators? *No.*

Thank you for taking the time to learn more  
about assisting residents who live with COPD

The next module - Medication Techniques & Devices

# Acknowledgements



***It takes a community to fix COPD***