



Printed from Krames Online:

<https://dhch.kramesonline.com/HealthSheets/3,S,88803>

[Close Window](#)

Medicines for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

Some medicines for COPD help control or prevent symptoms. They are called *maintenance* medicines. Take these medicines every day or as instructed by your healthcare provider. Some are *rescue* medicines. Take these only when you have symptoms like increased shortness of breath or chest tightness. Take this sheet with you to your next office visit and ask your healthcare provider to help you complete it.

Bronchodilators

What they do: Relax the muscles around airways. This allows you to breathe more easily.

Short-acting beta-2 agonists. These start working shortly after you use them. They are rescue medicines.

My medicines: _____

When to take: _____

Long-acting beta-2 agonists. These work more slowly than the fast-acting type. But the effects last longer. They are maintenance medicines.

My medicines: _____

When to take: _____

Anticholinergics. Rescue: These may be used along with a short-acting beta-2 agonist to help keep airways open.

My medicines: _____

When to take: _____

Anticholinergics. Maintenance: There are long-acting anticholinergics.

My medicines: _____

When to take: _____

Methylxanthines. These are maintenance medicines and have long-lasting effects. They may be useful if symptoms happen during sleep.

My medicines: _____

When to take: _____

Corticosteroids

What they do: Reduce inflammation, swelling, and mucus production. This allows you to breathe more easily.

Inhaled corticosteroids. These medicines are taken with an inhaler or nebulizer. They are maintenance medicines.

My medicines: _____

When to take: _____

Oral corticosteroids. These medicines are taken by mouth. They may be used when symptoms worsen.

My medicines: _____

When to take: _____

Phosphodiesterase type 4 (PDE4) inhibitors

What they do: Reduce the risk of flare-ups in patients with severe COPD.

My medicines: _____

When to take: _____

Combination medicines

What they do: Combine the effects of different types of medicines. For example, a combination medicine may relax the muscles around the airways and lessen the swelling or inflammation in the airway.

My medicines: _____

When to take: _____

Other medicines

Other medicines for COPD.

My medicine: _____

What it does: _____

When to take: _____

Herbal products and supplements

There are products for COPD that are available without a prescription. For example, herbs, extracts, or supplements. Be sure to talk with your healthcare provider before taking any of these products. They can interact with medicines you're taking.

© 2000-2017 The StayWell Company, LLC. 780 Township Line Road, Yardley, PA 19067. All rights reserved. This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Always follow your healthcare professional's instructions.