Checking In on Your Breathing

A 5-Question Guide to Spot Worsening Symptoms

This short list of questions can help you find out if your COPD symptoms are getting worse and get ready to talk with your doctor. By spending a few minutes thinking about your recent symptoms, medicine use, daily activities, and any worries you have, you'll be ready to get the care and help you need.

Breathlessness and Activity Tolerance Questions

Think about your symptoms over the past 7 days. This short 5-question check-in helps you look back on how your COPD symptoms have been over the past week.

Answer each question with Yes or No. Answer honestly. There are no right or wrong answers.

This tool does not diagnose or replace medical advice. It just helps you notice changes that you might want to talk about with your doctor.

Yes ☐ No ☐ **1. On most days, it is hard for me to catch my breath.**

Yes ☐ No ☐ **2. I have avoided activities because it was too hard to breathe.**

Yes ☐ No ☐ **3. I have often felt tired or drained from my breathing symptoms.**

Yes ☐ No ☐ **4. I have woken up at night this week from coughing or trouble breathing.**

Yes ☐ No ☐ **5. I have needed my rescue inhaler or nebulizer more than usual.**

Scoring: Assign 1 point for each "Yes" response. Total: _____

0–1 points — "Stable Zone"
Your symptoms appear fairly stable compared to your usual. You are reporting minimal disruption in breathing, activity, or sleep.

2–3 points — "Caution Zone"
You may be noticing more symptoms or having more trouble doing things. This can be a good time to think about recent triggers, illness, changes in the weather, or your activity habits.

4–5 points — "High Symptom Zone"
You have several symptoms that make daily life harder. This may be a good sign to contact your doctor, especially if any symptoms are new, surprising, or getting worse.

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Baseline Knowledge Questions*

Before your appointment, think about how you have been handling your COPD. These questions can help you sort out your thoughts, so you and your doctor can focus on what matters most to you.

1. **Do you know what "exacerbation" or "flare-up" means?**
2. **Do you know when to talk to your health care provider about symptoms?**
3. **Do you know which inhalers/nebulizers are for daily use or for rescue?**
4. **Do you have a COPD action plan?**
5. **How do you track changes in your breathing or other COPD symptoms?**

**This questionnaire is reflective and does not serve as a substitute for medical advice. Always seek care from your doctor or health care provider if you have COPD symptoms.*

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