

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

PREVENTING HOSPITAL READMISSION OF EXACERBATIONS

Definition and Facts

COPD is...

a treatable, chronic condition that is characterized by:

- Chronic airflow limitation
- Unusual inflammatory response to toxic chemicals or irritants



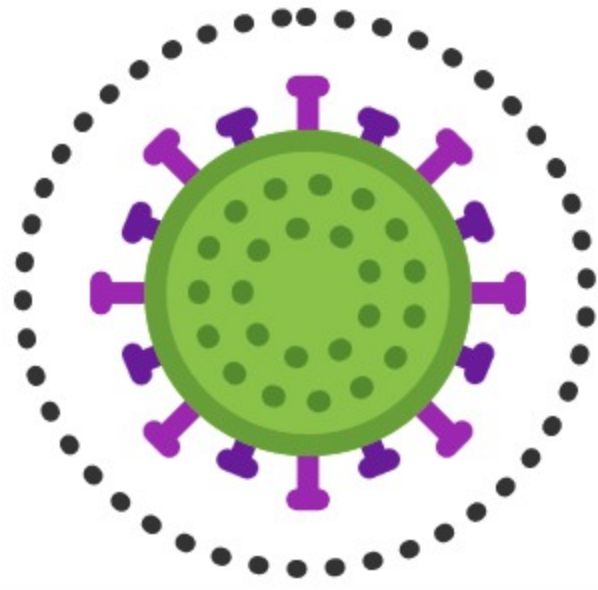
An exacerbation is...

an event that occurs in people with COPD that presents as ACUTE changes in breathing.



Infection is...

the most common cause of COPD exacerbations. Other causes include severe allergies and inhaled irritants



Exacerbation Symptoms



Look and Listen

- Increased respiratory rate
- Increased shortness of breath
- Use of accessory muscle for breathing
- Worsening cough/sputum production
- Decreased breath sounds
- Inspiratory wheeze
- Difficulty speaking due to breathing effort



Report any **acute** changes in respiratory status per facility policy.

Treatment Options

Medications

The ABC Approach:

- Antibiotics
- Bronchodilators
- Corticosteroids

RN/LPN Role

Administer and assist with prescribed treatment.



Additional Therapy

- Supplemental oxygen therapy
- Chest physiotherapy per facility policy

Prevention Strategies

- ✓ Encourage resident to get flu and pneumonia vaccine
- ✓ Assist with hand washing
- ✓ Promote activity as tolerated



- ✓ Motivate residents to stay hydrated
- ✓ Educate residents and families about disease and risk factors
- ✓ Smoking cessation