

## Reducing and Stopping Inhaled Corticosteroids in COPD

### What are inhaled corticosteroids?

Corticosteroid or 'steroid' inhalers are usually prescribed for people with more severe chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Examples include fluticasone (which is the steroid present in Seretide®) and budesonide (which is the steroid present in Symbicort®).

### Why am I taking them?

Steroids in COPD help prevent acute exacerbations – becoming unwell with worsening cough, phlegm and breathlessness. But recent research suggests steroids may do more harm than good in mild COPD.

### What are the risks of continuing steroids?

Using steroid inhalers long term can increase the chance of getting pneumonia. Less serious problems include thrush in the mouth and getting a hoarse voice. Steroids may also increase the chance of osteoporosis (weak bones), cataracts in the eyes, and diabetes.

### What are the risks of stopping steroids?

Recent research shows that if you have mild COPD, you are not having frequent exacerbations and you do not have asthma, then it is safe to gradually cut down and then stop your steroid inhaler.

### How will this happen?

Your doctor or nurse will advise on changes to your inhaler to gradually reduce the amount of steroid you take. It is important to stay on your other inhalers as these help keep your airways open. Regular reviews at the surgery, or by phone, will help you manage these changes.

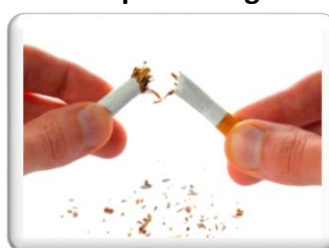
### What else can I do to help my COPD?

There are other things you can do to manage your COPD and stay healthy:

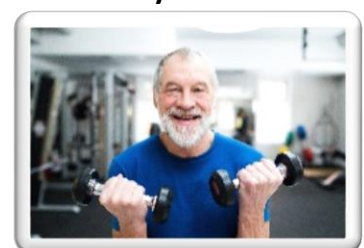
#### Flu vaccination



#### Stop Smoking



#### Pulmonary Rehabilitation



Ask your GP or nurse for more information.

## Care plan for inhaled corticosteroid reduction

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Dr or Nurse \_\_\_\_\_

### Inhalers to continue

Name of Inhaler	Dose	Duration
	<i>As prescribed</i>	<i>Continue long term</i>

### Inhalers to change

Name of Inhaler	Dose	Duration

### Referrals

Smoking Cessation	
Pulmonary Rehabilitation	

### Review Appointments

Date	Time	Phone or Face-to-Face	By