



# Have COPD? Have the CHAT

## Stay well this winter

During winter you are more likely to have a Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) exacerbation, known as a flare up of symptoms. Every exacerbation does long term damage to your health and can increase your risk of death - more than a heart attack<sup>1</sup>.

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### Reduce your risk of an exacerbation. Do our Have the CHAT checklist:

- Get your vaccinations (influenza; pneumococcal pneumonia)
- Keep active e.g with pulmonary rehabilitation
- Check how to use your inhaler device with your General Practitioner (GP)/pharmacist
- Ask your GP for a COPD Action Plan
- Know the signs of an exacerbation:
  - C**oughing more than usual.
  - H**arder to breathe than usual.
  - A**ny change in sputum (phlegm).
  - T**ired more than usual (less active).

If you have these symptoms. Have the CHAT with your doctor.

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**Find out more**  
**Free call 1800 654 301**  
[lungfoundation.com.au/have-the-chat](http://lungfoundation.com.au/have-the-chat)

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*when you can't breathe... nothing else matters\**

# How to stay well and out of hospital

It's vital to **Have the CHAT** with your doctor as soon as you experience any worsening of symptoms.

Here are some tips on making the most out of your doctor's appointment.

- Make appointments with the same doctor, except in an urgent situation and when your normal doctor is unavailable.
- List questions and concerns about your COPD in order of priority before your visit.
- Ask for a longer appointment or schedule a second visit if you have lots of questions or concerns.
- Don't avoid asking questions because you are embarrassed. Your doctor is there to help.
- Bring a friend or family member for support.
- Ask your doctor to write answers down so you can review them later.
- Find out from your doctor when you should make your next appointment and ask what to do if your symptoms worsen or if you're not getting better.

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## For more information and support contact

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1 Halpin D. Mortality in COPD: Inevitable or Preventable? Insights from the Cardiovascular Arena. COPD: Journal of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease 2008. 5:3, 187-200.