

Here is Bob's experience of being diagnosed with COPD.

Bob, aged 56 and a smoker for 35 years, visited his GP because he felt breathless when walking. The GP and hospital doctors did a number of tests and diagnosed COPD. The GP prescribed nicotine patches to help Bob stop smoking and medication to make breathing easier. Bob attended a hospital pulmonary (lung) rehabilitation programme, where he learnt about his condition and what he can do to manage it. A physiotherapist explained the importance of staying physically active and gave Bob some breathing exercises to do. A dietician explained about healthy eating and suggested ways Bob could improve his diet. Specialist hospital nurses see Bob regularly to monitor his health and wellbeing.

#### ACTIVITY

Sit comfortably on a chair with your legs uncrossed. Focus on your breathing.

If you can, breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Let the breath flow in and out gently.

Try to count from 1 to 5 as you breathe in, and again as you breathe out. It may take some time before you can reach a count of 5.

Repeat this 10 times.

Notice the difference between your breathing before and during this activity – the pace of breathing and the volume of air breathed in and out.

Suggest one way this activity can promote wellbeing.

#### CHECK MY LEARNING

Explain what happens to airways during an asthma attack and the symptoms of an asthma attack.

Explain one similarity and one difference between asthma and COPD.



■ Regular activity and healthy eating can help people with COPD reduce their symptoms

#### DID YOU KNOW?

The average person takes over 22,000 breaths each day.

#### LINK IT UP

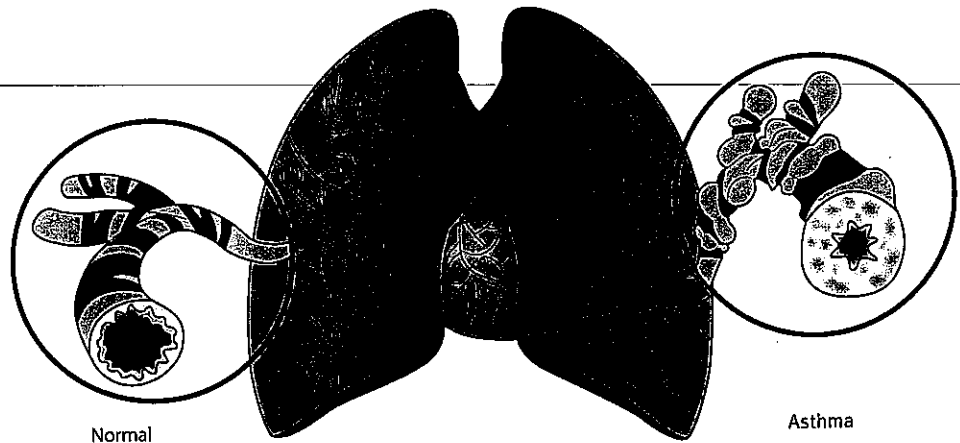
For more information about support for people with chronic ill health, go to B in Component 1.

## Health conditions – asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease

### GETTING STARTED

People with asthma struggle to breathe during an asthma attack. List three words to describe the possible emotional impact of an asthma attack.

### Asthma



- Airways of the lungs in someone with asthma are inflamed and narrowed compared with a normal lung

Asthma is a chronic (long term), potentially life threatening condition that affects the lungs. On average, every 10 seconds someone has an asthma attack and 3 people die from asthma every day in the UK. Symptoms of asthma include feeling breathless, wheezing and coughing.

People with asthma have inflamed, sensitive airways that become narrowed and clogged with sticky mucus. This can happen randomly or after exposure to a trigger. Common asthma triggers include allergies (for example, dust mites, pollen and animal fur), exercise, pollution, mould, damp, cold air, infections and stress.

For most people with asthma, it can be well managed by using medication (preventer and reliever inhalers) and minimising exposure to triggers. An allergy test can help identify triggers. About 5% of all people with asthma have severe asthma. These people have symptoms most of the time and find them hard to control, despite additional medication. This can cause anxiety and depression. Poorly managed asthma leads to a poorer quality of life and more emergency hospital admissions.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Someone having an asthma attack should take one puff of their blue reliever inhaler every 30 to 60 seconds, up to 10 puffs. If there is no improvement after 10 puffs, dial 999.

### ACTIVITY

Undertake research to explain three ways in which asthma can impact quality of life.

### Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

COPD can cause breathing difficulties and is a condition that mainly affects people in middle and older adulthood. 9 out of 10 cases of COPD are caused by smoking, but exposure to harmful fumes and dust are also causes. Lungs become inflamed, damaged and narrowed by COPD and symptoms include breathlessness, a chesty cough, tiredness, frequent chest infections and wheezing. Treatment can help reduce symptoms but there is no cure, which can have a big impact on quality of life.

# Respiratory Conditions

Respiratory conditions affect the **lungs** and other parts of the **respiratory system**. They affect one in five people and are the **third biggest** cause of death in England.

The respiratory system is the network of organs and tissues that help you breathe.

## Asthma

**Task 1** Read through each statement about asthma in the table below. If you think the statement is correct, tick the True box. If you think it is wrong, tick the False box.

Statement	True	False
Asthma causes difficulties with breathing.		
Using an inhaler stops an individual from having asthma.		
Asthma always starts in childhood and gets worse as you get older.		
Asthma inhalers contain steroids.		
Asthma is where an individual's breathing tubes become narrow because they are swollen.		

**Task 2** Fill in the gaps below.

The main symptoms of asthma are:

- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....



**Task 3** In your own words, describe the two types of **inhalers** that are used to treat asthma.

**Reliever inhaler**

**Preventer inhaler**

# Respiratory Conditions

**Task 4** There are lots of ways someone can help manage their asthma symptoms. Write these ways in the box headings and add a description for each one.

**Take regular exercise**

*E.g. Exercise like yoga and swimming are especially helpful to individuals who have asthma. Yoga helps with breathing and swimming is done in a warm and humid space which may be beneficial for asthma sufferers.*

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## **I can't stop talking back — I think I've got sassthma...**

Asthma reviews are important routine check-ups for patients. What sort of topics could be brought up during an asthma review? What could make someone's asthma worse?