



Surgery

In addition to medications, there are a couple of different types of surgeries that may be recommended by your doctor.

Lung Transplant

Lung transplant is not a cure, but a treatment. Lung transplants may be an option for some people with advanced COPD, who no longer smoke and who will not survive without a lung transplant. There are specific requirements to qualify for a lung transplant, and, if you meet these, you will be put on a wait list for a transplant. The wait might be long. In a lung transplant, surgeons take out one or two of the lungs and replace them with healthy lungs. The surgery can be risky. People who receive transplants must take immunosuppressants (anti-rejection medicines) for the rest of their lives.

Lung Volume Reduction Surgery

This type of surgery is done in order to help some people with COPD breathe better. If your doctor decides you qualify for this type of surgery, it may help with shortness of breath. During the surgery, pieces of the damaged lung tissue are removed. This allows the healthy tissue to “work better.”

What is a COPD Action Plan?

Think of a COPD Action Plan as a written contract between you and your doctor or your COPD team. This document gives you a clear outline of what triggers your COPD, how you can avoid these triggers, and what to do in case of a flare-up [See p.12 - *Triggers and Flare-ups*]. You will develop this plan with your doctor and a Certified Respiratory Educator. This document is a very important tool you can use to manage your COPD. Your action plan helps to identify the signs you experience before a flare-up and helps you recognize these in the future. This way, you will know when a flare-up is coming and be ready to treat this early.

For example, you will write down how you feel before you have a flare-up. Your doctor or Certified Respiratory Educator will work with you on how to deal with it. Next time when you are experiencing the same symptoms, you refer to your COPD action plan and act according to your doctor’s instructions.

While your action plan serves as a guide for helping you avoid emergency departments in case of a flare-up, you should continue to take your medication as prescribed even if you are feeling well.