Breathe Easy - COPD Information

For more information please contact us:

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Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

- An estimated 3 million people in the UK have chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- About 900,000 have diagnosed COPD
- An estimated 2 million people have COPD which remains undiagnosed
- Most patients are not diagnosed until they are in their fifties.
  
  Source: NICE

Definition of COPD

“It is the name used to describe a number of conditions, including chronic bronchitis and emphysema, where people have difficulty breathing because of long-term damage to their lungs.”
  
  (Source: British Lung Foundation)

Causes of COPD

The biggest single cause of COPD is cigarette smoking but it can also result from chronic, severe asthma.

Symptoms of COPD

Symptoms vary based on the severity of the COPD, but they include:
- long-term, chesty cough
- wheeze
- phlegm
- breathlessness
- anxiety and sometimes depression

Diagnosis of COPD

Diagnosis of COPD is undertaken using two tests:
- A spirometer test
- A peak flow test

You should make an appointment with your GP who will either undertake the tests or refer you for them.

Management of COPD

COPD can be managed through medication, use of oxygen therapy and pulmonary rehabilitation which includes gentle exercise, advice and support to cope with and manage the symptoms.
Many people who have COPD choose not to exercise because it makes them breathless. However, choosing not to exercise means that your fitness level decreases and gradually any activity will become more difficult and be accompanied by greater breathlessness.

Age UK Leicester Shire & Rutland has been commissioned by Leicester City Clinical Commissioning Group to run a series of exercise classes for those suffering from COPD. Classes will run for 8 weeks from Friday 20th June and Friday 12th September respectively.

Breathe Easy classes will offer COPD sufferers an appropriate level of exercise for their condition to help to maintain fitness levels and slow down the progress of the COPD.

The classes also offer information and advice for those managing COPD.

Contact us for details of your nearest exercise class on 0116 299 2254 or email kirstie.smith@ageukleics.org.uk

**Sources of more information about COPD**

If you think you may have COPD you should make an appointment with your GP.

Other sources of information for those diagnosed with COPD include:

- The NHS [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)
- The British Lung Foundation [www.blf.org.uk](http://www.blf.org.uk) 0116 249 5780
- NICE [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)
How can we help you?

**Information & Advice** [Open Monday to Friday, 11:00am - 4:00pm] 0116 299 2278
A free and confidential service to assist with issues affecting your quality of life including: finances & welfare benefits; housing & property; leisure activities.

**Wellbeing Services** 0116 222 0572
Social support in a community setting including care, entertainment and companionship, with optional transport if required.

**Home Care** 0116 299 2266
Assistance with domestic tasks to make living at home that little easier to manage. Services include: food preparation; cleaning & ironing; shopping; collecting prescriptions; personal care; companionship; support with appointments & outings.

**Handyman & Gardening** 0116 299 2254
A ‘no job too small’ household maintenance service including: gardening; home security & safety; basic decorating; home maintenance.

**Respite** 0116 299 2266
Fully trained Respite Workers offer carers a break from the stress and demands of caring for someone. We also offer dementia respite by workers experienced and trained in dementia care.

**Befriending Services** 0116 299 2233
A free service offering a daily or weekly phone call to carers and those who live alone giving the opportunity for a friendly chat which can make all the difference. Home befriending visits are available in NW Leicestershire & Rutland.

**Insurance Services** 0116 216 9220
Products and services for the over 50s: home, car and travel insurance, personal alarms, gas & electricity*, funeral plans.

* Terms and Conditions apply

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