

Living Well **COPD**TM with

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

A Learning Tool for Patients and Their Families

Preventing Your Symptoms and Taking Your Medications

- Understanding the self-cleaning mechanism of your airways
- Defining COPD, and learning about the main causes, signs and symptoms
- Avoiding the things in life that make your symptoms worse
- Taking your medication and using your inhalation devices

This guide belongs to:

2nd Edition 2005

The skills you need to manage your COPD

COPD is a disease that can seriously affect every part of your life. Simple activities you once took for granted, such as taking a walk or getting dressed, can become major challenges. Flare-ups, or worsening symptoms – the main cause of hospitalization in people with COPD – can further affect your quality of life. Fortunately, there is a lot that you can do to overcome and prevent these limitations, and improve your well-being. This is why we have created this series of workbooks on COPD self-management.

How can this program help me with self-management of the disease?

This is an educational program in which you learn skills to manage your disease and adopt healthy new lifestyle behaviours. This series of workbooks is part of that program, based on real-life experiences.

Medical experts and patients with COPD – people just like you – worked together to update this program that you can customize for yourself. National¹ and international^{2,3} guidelines agree that patient education and self-management are valuable for people with COPD.

We also tested this educational program as part of a clinical trial. And the results were very encouraging. Patients who used these workbooks in collaboration with their healthcare worker, “case manager” or resource person and physician had fewer hospitalizations and fewer emergency room visits. Their overall health also improved, enabling them to do more of the activities they enjoyed, and better cope with their disease.^{4,5}

This is your guide. Use it to write down your questions or concerns. Share it with people close to you so that they can understand what you are going through. Discuss whatever thoughts and feelings you have with your case manager or resource person and your physician.

Good luck with your program.

Dr. Jean Bourbeau



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Welcome to “Preventing your Symptoms and Taking your Medications” of the learning series Living Well with COPD

Shortness of breath, coughing, wheezing and anxiety are a fact of life for most people with COPD. Learning how to prevent and control these symptoms can help you live a fuller and more active life.

Living well with COPD means avoiding or reducing your exposure to factors that make your symptoms worse, knowing what your COPD medications do and how to take them as prescribed and with the proper technique.

In this module you will learn about:

- ✓ Self-cleaning mechanism of your airways
- ✓ Main cause of COPD
- ✓ COPD (chronic obstructive bronchitis and/or emphysema), signs and symptoms
- ✓ Things in the environment that may make your symptoms worse, how to avoid them or reduce your exposure
- ✓ Medications and the importance of taking them as prescribed
- ✓ Inhalation devices, proper technique and cleaning

This module includes drug information that is referenced from the Health Canada-approved Product Monograph of each drug therapy. If there are any questions about the medications presented, please ask a healthcare professional to go through the information with you.