



Fall/Winter 2016

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

A guide to safe oxygen use

Do you use oxygen therapy as part of your treatment for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)? Take note of these safety tips:

Steady it. Oxygen cylinders are highly pressurized. Store them upright. And keep them secure.

Stay away from flames or other types of heat. Oxygen can fuel

a fire. When you're using it, make sure you:

- Avoid lighted candles, matches and cigarette lighters
- Tell people not to smoke in your home
- Keep at least five feet away from electric or gas heaters and stoves

Maintain your equipment. Replace your cannula or breathing mask often. It's also a good idea to replace it after you've had a cold. Follow all

instructions for maintaining the equipment too.

Remember to use the off switch.

When not in use, oxygen supply valves should be turned off.

Share these tips with your caregivers and family too. They can help you keep safe and avoid any hazards.

Source: American Lung Association (www.lung.org)

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This is general health information and should not replace the advice or care you get from your provider. Always ask your provider about your own health care needs. If you would no longer like to receive this mailing, please contact the Care Management Department.

Contact us

Aetna Better Health® of Virginia, 9881 Mayland Drive
Richmond, VA 23233

Member Services: **1-800-279-1878**
(TTY **7-1-1** or **1-800-828-1120**)

Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

www.aetnabetterhealth.com/virginia

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Spirometry: A must-have test

To help you breathe better, your doctor needs to know how well your lungs are working. One way to find out is with spirometry.

Done regularly, this test shows if your lung function has changed over time. This is useful information that can guide your treatment plan.

Here are three common questions you may have about this test:

- 1. What does it measure?** Spirometry measures the amount and speed of the air you blow out.
- 2. How is it done?** First, you take a deep breath. Then you blow out as hard as you can into a device called a spirometer. This records the results.
- 3. Why do it?** Spirometry is an important test. It helps your doctor know whether your asthma or COPD is under control. If it's not, then your doctor can make changes to your medicine.

Sources: *American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology* (www.aaaai.org); *National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute* (www.nhlbi.nih.gov)



Need help? Your care manager can tell you more about chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and help you connect with your provider. Call Member Services and ask for the Care Management Department.

Do the holidays stress you out?

Winter can be a difficult time of year. The weather changes and the holidays are upon us. Having a chronic condition can add to these challenges. Sometimes that causes depression and anxiety. That, in turn, can make your condition worse. It can also hurt family and friend relationships and other areas of your life.

If you feel down or out-of-sorts for a couple weeks or

more, tell your doctor. A simple, online questionnaire can help start that discussion. Go to www.adaa.org and click on “Live and Thrive.” On the “Ask and Learn” page, you’ll find a link to a depression screening tool. After you answer the questions, print the results and share them with your doctor.

Source: *Anxiety and Depression Association of America* (www.adaa.org)

Flu season is here: Have you gotten your shot?

Your best bet for avoiding the flu? Get a shot every year.

That’s true for just about everyone. And if you have a chronic condition, it’s even more important. Try to get the shot as soon as you can in the fall.

Source: *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention* (www.cdc.gov)