

Respiratory Definition of COPD Severity

Lothian Locality COPD Guidance: Principles for treatment at each stage of the disease

From the Global Strategy for the Diagnosis, Management, and Prevention of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (GOLD) 2008. Available from: <http://www.goldcopd.or>

As well as spirometry, it is important to assess the patient's symptoms using the MRC breathlessness scale:

I: Mild

- $FEV_1 \geq 80\%$ predicted
- $FEV_1/VC < 70\%$
- with or without symptoms

II: Moderate

- $FEV_1 < 80\%$ predicted
- $FEV_1/VC < 70\%$
- with or without symptoms

III: Severe

- $FEV_1 < 50\%$ predicted
- $FEV_1/VC < 70\%$
- with or without symptoms

IV: Very severe

- $FEV_1 < 30\%$ predicted
- $FEV_1/VC < 70\%$
- presence of chronic respiratory failure or right heart failure

Avoidance of risk factor(s); influenza/pneumococcal vaccination – stop smoking – offer help at every opportunity

- **ADD** short-acting bronchodilator and/or anticholinergic when needed to help reduce breathlessness and increase exercise tolerance.
- **ADD** regular treatment with one or more long-acting bronchodilators.
- **ADD** pulmonary rehabilitation.
- **ADD** inhaled glucocorticosteroids if repeated exacerbations. If still symptomatic, **CONSIDER** adding theophylline.
- **ADD** long term oxygen therapy.
 - If chronic respiratory failure, refer to secondary care.
- **CONSIDER** surgical treatments.