

# The winter chest plan

You have probably lived with your ‘bad chest’ for many years and can judge when it is becoming worse.

Start steroid tablet treatment if you are unwell with your chest and you are:

1. More short of breath than usual
2. Coughing up more phlegm than normal

And start antibiotics tablets if

1. The colour of your phlegm has turned to green or brown

Also please:

* Increase the use of your ‘reliever’ inhaler (the blue one)
* Phone the surgery to let us know you are unwell

If you are feeling better after three days on your antibiotics there is no need to finish the complete 5 day course.

For most people we would not usually recommend early use of antibiotics for winter chest problems. However, you have a chest problem which makes you more at risk of serious infection.

*Please keep the enclosed prescription safe, and use it if you get unwell. Please do not get the tablets unless you feel you need them.*

Medical advice on how deal with illnesses which effect your chest over the winter months

*NHS Tameside and Glossop*

Getting through the winter with a

bad chest

# Tips on keeping well

As we all know there are many infections, coughs and colds, which go around in the winter months. Certain people with bad chests, especially those with a condition called chronic obstructive pulmonary disease find it difficult to fight off colds and they can soon become a serious chest infection.

We feel you are such a patient and we would like to do our best to keep you as well as possible this winter. Though, we can’t stop you from catching the coughs and colds that go around, there are some important things which can be done to greatly reduce the chances of a simple winter bug becoming a serious chest infection.

* have an influenza immunisation
* have a second immunisation called the pneumovax, this protects you against the commonest bacteria to cause pneumonia. (You need only one of these immunisations in your life)
* Stop smoking
* take steps to prevent a serious infection developing as soon as possible. Follow the ‘Winter Chest Plan’. (see next page)