Chronic Bronchitis and Emphysema Exacerbation (Worsening)

You have chronic obstructive lung disease which has gotten worse. This can be an increase in your cough, wheezing, or shortness of breath. These problems are often worse during periods of air pollution or if you are exposed to smoke.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- **You should avoid all substances which irritate the airway, especially tobacco smoke**.
- If you are a smoker, consider using nicotine gum or patches to quit. Quitting smoking is very important to prevent worsening of this disease.
- Increasing oral fluids and using a cool air vaporizer can help thin bronchial secretions. This makes it easier to clear your chest when you cough.
- If you have a home nebulizer and oxygen, continue to use them as directed.

The following medications may be prescribed to help you depending on what your caregiver finds today.

- Antibiotics.
- Bronchodilators (inhaled or tablets).
- Cortisone medicines (inhaled or tablets).
- It is important to use good technique with inhaled medications, and spacer devices may be needed to help improve drug delivery. Chronic lung disease is frequently severe and hospital care may be needed. Be sure to follow-up as recommended with your primary caregiver.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF YOU DEVELOP:

- Extreme shortness of breath.
- Severe chest pain or blood in your sputum.
- A high fever, weakness, repeated vomiting, or fainting.
- Confusion.
- **Take all medications as directed.**

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

Document Released: 10/14/2008 Document Re-Released: 11/30/2009
ExitCare® Patient Information ©2011 ExitCare, LLC.