

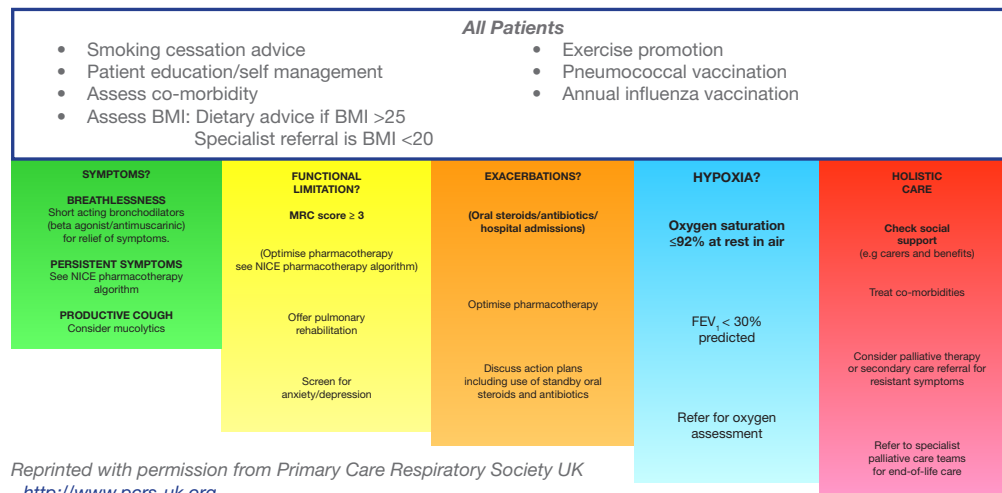
# Drug treatments in COPD

COPD affects different patients in different ways. Some patients may be more troubled by breathlessness, while others may be experiencing frequent hospital admissions. The management of an individual patient's disease should be guided by the symptoms and disability that they experience.

- All COPD patients still smoking, regardless of age, should be encouraged to stop, and offered help to do so, at every opportunity
- COPD medicines review should be based on the severity of the disease e.g. mild patients can be reviewed yearly whilst those with more severe disease may need to be seen every 3-6 months
- Drug treatment for COPD is part of a wider multi-dimensional approach to treatment. The Primary Care Respiratory Society UK (PCRS-UK) has produced a patient-centred holistic management algorithm and this is shown in Figure 1.

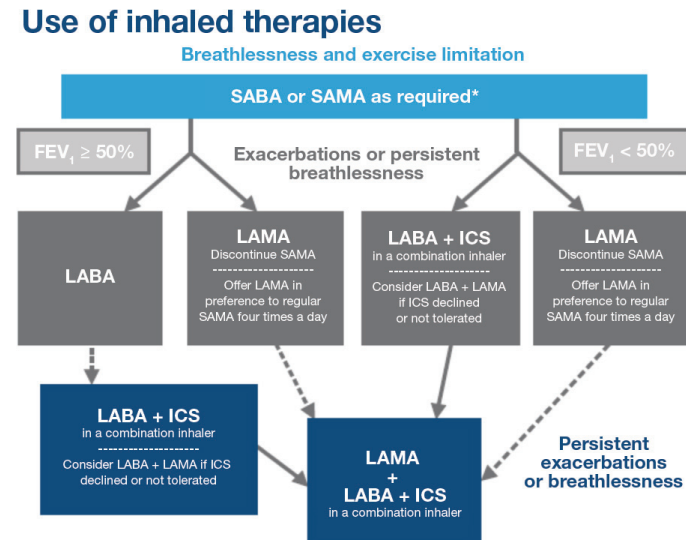
This management algorithm encompasses pharmacological treatment, non-pharmacological treatment and the importance of holistic care. The PCRS-UK algorithm also refers to the "NICE pharmacotherapy algorithm" and this is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 1 Holistic management of COPD



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Figure 2 NICE pharmacotherapy algorithm



**Abbreviations:**

SABA: Short-acting β<sub>2</sub> agonist SAMA: Short-acting muscarinic antagonist LABA: Long-acting β<sub>2</sub> agonist. LAMA: Long-acting muscarinic antagonist \*SABA (as required) may continue at all stages  
 ———> Offer therapy (strong evidence) - - - - -> Consider therapy (less strong evidence)

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**References**

Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (GOLD). Available from: <http://www.goldcopd.org>; National Clinical Guideline Centre. (2010) Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease: management of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease in adults in primary and secondary care. London: National Clinical Guideline Centre. <http://guidance.nice.org.uk/CG101/Guidance/pdf/English>; PCRS-UK Opinion Sheet. Available at: [http://www.pcrs-uk.org/resources/os13\\_copd\\_stable.pdf](http://www.pcrs-uk.org/resources/os13_copd_stable.pdf)