TITLE: Clinical Management of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease in the Emergency Department: Guidelines

DATE: 7 April 2011

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the evidence-based guidelines regarding optimal management of patients with acute exacerbated COPD in the Emergency Department (ED) then discharged home?

2. What are the evidence-based guidelines regarding optimal management of patients with acute exacerbated COPD in the ED then admitted to hospital?

3. What are the evidence-based guidelines regarding optimal management of patients with acute exacerbated COPD in the ED then asked to return for follow-up care or treatment?

KEY MESSAGE

Three guidelines were identified and found to be consistent in terms of the major aspects of managing patients with acute exacerbated COPD in hospital settings, including discharge and follow-up.

METHODS

A limited literature search was conducted on key resources including PubMed, The Cochrane Library (Issue 3, 2011), University of York Centre for Reviews and Dissemination (CRD) databases, ECRI (Health Devices Gold), EuroScan, Canadian and major international health technology agencies, and a focused Internet search. The search was limited to English language articles published between January 1, 2006 and March 25, 2011. No filters were applied to limit the retrieval by study type. Internet links were provided, where available.

The summary of findings was prepared from the abstracts of the relevant information. Please note that data contained in abstracts may not always be an accurate reflection of the data contained within the full article.

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RESULTS

Rapid Response reports are organized so that the higher quality evidence is presented first. Therefore, health technology assessment reports, systematic reviews, and meta-analyses are presented first. These are followed by evidence-based guidelines.

Three evidence-based guidelines were identified regarding the optimal management of patients with acute exacerbated COPD in the ED. No health technology assessments or systematic reviews were identified. Further information that may be of interest is located in the appendix.

OVERALL SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Three guidelines were found which included sections detailing the management of patients with acute exacerbated COPD. Of these, one\(^1\) was conducted by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) in the UK, another\(^2\) by a joint project of the Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand and the Australian Lung Foundation, and the third\(^3\) by the Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Diseases (GOLD).

Guidelines for the management of COPD in the ED or hospital settings agree on the following aspects of care:

- assessments (e.g., severity of symptoms,\(^1-3\) chest X-Rays,\(^1-3\) arterial blood gas levels,\(^1-3\) spirometry\(^1,2\))
- treatment strategies (e.g., bronchodilators,\(^1-3\) oral corticosteroids for no longer than 10 to 14 days,\(^1-3\) antibiotics where purulent sputum presents,\(^1-3\) use of doxapram only when noninvasive ventilation is unavailable or inappropriate\(^1,3\))
- discharge criteria (e.g., stable oximetry or arterial blood gas results,\(^1-3\) patient ability to walk short distances if previously able,\(^2,3\) patient, family, and doctor confidence of patient’s ability to manage\(^1,3\))
- recommended follow-up (e.g., referrals/arrangements for multiple support strategies and types of care\(^1-3\)).

Links to the full guideline documents\(^1-3\) are provided in the reference list for access to more detailed and comprehensive information.
REFERENCES SUMMARIZED

Health technology assessments
No literature identified.

Systematic reviews and meta-analyses
No literature identified.

Evidence-based guidelines and recommendations

   Note: See section 8, Management of Exacerbations of COPD, pg 351

   Note: See section X: Manage eXacerbations, pg 48

   Note: See Component 4: Manage Exacerbations, pg 64

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APPENDIX – FURTHER INFORMATION:

Systematic reviews (not specific to hospital care)


Non-randomized studies


Guidelines (methodology not specified)


Review articles
