

RCGP Curriculum

Supercondensed Curriculum Guide

RESPIRATORY HEALTH

Role of the GP

- Recognise that the identification, assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of most acute and chronic respiratory diseases are managed in primary care
- Consider how respiratory disease affects patients of all ages. It brings specific challenges in the diagnosis and treatment of various groups including children, some occupational and ethnic groups, those with social and mental health challenges, and those nearing the end of their life
- Consider its role in preventative medicine, including smoking cessation.

Knowledge and Skills Self-Assessment Guide

Symptoms and Signs



- Chest pain
- Clubbing
- Cough,
- Cyanosis
- Dyspnoea:
- Fever
- General malaise including weight loss and fatigue
- Haemoptysis
- Lung signs – for example, wheeze and consolidation on auscultation
- Lymphadenopathy
- Signs of respiratory distress in children (e.g., recession, nasal flaring)
- Stridor and hoarseness
- Tachypnoea
- Peripheral oedema.

Knowledge and Skills Self-Assessment Guide

Common and Important Conditions



- Asthma: acute and chronic
- Asthma-COPD overlap
- Bronchiectasis
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Connective tissue diseases affecting the lung
- Genetic conditions including Cystic fibrosis and α 1-antitrypsin deficiency
- Immunosuppression affecting the respiratory system
- Lower respiratory tract infections
- Lung fibrosis and associated causes including adverse drug reactions
- Occupational respiratory diseases
- Pleural effusion caused by infection, connective tissue diseases and malignancies
- Pneumothorax including simple and tension
- Pulmonary embolism
- Respiratory failure and methods of ventilation such as CPAP for sleep apnoea
- Primary and secondary lung malignancies, and related paraneoplastic syndromes
- Upper respiratory tract infections.

RESPIRATORY HEALTH

Knowledge and Skills Self-Assessment Guide

Examinations and Procedures



- Appropriate focused clinical examination to identify respiratory disease
- Specific procedures, such as peak expiratory flow rate measurement
- Demonstrate the correct use of inhalers, including with delivery device and check that a patient can use their device properly
- Administration of inhaled bronchodilators with spacer or nebuliser, including correct techniques.

Knowledge and Skills Self-Assessment Guide

Investigations



- Spirometry, exhaled nitric oxide testing (FeNO), pulse oximetry, blood tests and sputum culture
- Disease scoring tools (e.g., CRB-65 for community acquired pneumonia)
- Indications for chest-x-rays, CT, and MRI scans.

Knowledge and Skills Self-Assessment Guide

Additional Important Content



- The importance of lifestyle changes, particularly smoking cessation, and pulmonary rehabilitation
- The impact of co-morbidity such as muscle wasting, osteoporosis, cardiovascular disease, or mental health problems in people with long-term respiratory conditions such as asthma and COPD, and the effect of these on morbidity and mortality
- The potential for financial compensation for those diagnosed with mesothelioma and other occupational lung diseases. Appropriate signposting to specialist services, and appropriate death certification for these conditions.

RESPIRATORY HEALTH

How this might be tested in MRCGP

AKT



- Interpretation of spirometry results
- Differential diagnosis of breathlessness
- Management of acute and chronic asthma.

SCA

- A blind woman has recently been diagnosed with asthma and was prescribed salbutamol, but she is still symptomatic
- A carer requests a house visit to an elderly man who has a dry cough and become slightly confused over the past few days
- Man with COPD has been stable on three inhaled medications but is now complaining of increasing cough and dyspnoea.



WPBA



- Log entry about your involvement in the asthma clinic and the indications for the different asthma inhalers available
- Consultation Observation Tool (COT) about a woman with a persistent cough whose chest x-ray suggests sarcoidosis
- Audit on the use of high-dose steroid inhalers with reference to current national guidelines.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES (Examples)

Core Content

- **Communication and Consultation**
 - Person-centred, culturally-sensitive approaches to respiratory disease and risk factors, including exploring patients concerns and how to explain diagnoses sensitively
- **Holistic Care**
 - The impact of respiratory disease on the individual (such as daily activities, work, family life)
- **Prescribing**
 - Polypharmacy
 - Safe and effective prescribing
- **Co-morbidity**
 - Considering impact of lifestyle on respiratory disease
 - Consider the impact of respiratory disease on other conditions, such as cardiovascular disease
- **Teamworking**
 - Good communication with other healthcare and social care organisations, especially community teams
- **Medico-legal/ Ethics**
 - End-of-life care and death certification
 - Understanding the importance of involving the patient in clinical decision making
 - Occupational lung diseases and asbestos exposure
- **Health promotion and prevention**
 - Smoking cessation
 - Healthy lifestyle.

Acute Care

- Acute exacerbation of chronic respiratory disease (e.g., asthma, COPD)
- Assessment/ management of a patient with hypoxia/ tachypnoea/ respiratory distress (e.g., pneumonia, pneumothorax, pulmonary embolism, pulmonary oedema/ effusion, bronchiolitis)
- Acute haemoptysis.

Primary care



- Systems for managing the COPD and Asthma registers and supporting patient care
- Managing risk and complexity, alongside comorbidities and polypharmacy
- Systems for identifying patients who may benefit from lifestyle interventions, considering the social determinants of health
- Coordination of end-of-life pathways
- Quality improvement (e.g., ensuring eligible patients are offered bone protection).

Multidisciplinary Team

- Coordinating care with community teams, such as community respiratory nurses, community physiotherapy rehab, admission avoidance teams
- Utilising the whole primary care team to support patients to improve risk factors, such as weight management and smoking cessation, and to support the health and wellbeing of patients.

Other Specialties



- Infectious diseases and public health.
- Paediatrics
- Oncology and palliative care.