

CRYPTOGENIC ORGANISING PNEUMONIA (COP)

What is 'COP' or 'BOOP'?

- 'COP' is a lung condition of unknown cause
- It may also be known as 'BOOP', particularly if a cause for the condition has been found (such as certain drugs, rheumatoid arthritis and other 'connective tissue diseases' or after radiotherapy treatment for breast cancer)
- The condition appears to be due to an abnormal healing response within the lung to some form of damage (although the cause of the damage is not really understood)

What are the symptoms of COP or BOOP?

- COP often begins with what seems like a 'flu-like illness
- The symptoms of COP vary, however often include:
 - Fevers and sweats
 - dry cough
 - shortness of breath
 - lack of energy
 - weight loss

How is COP diagnosed?

- Usually, it is necessary to obtain a sample of lung tissue with a biopsy
- The biopsy can sometimes be performed with a 'bronchoscopy', by passing a camera into the lungs (see – 'transbronchial biopsy' in 'Bronchoscopy' information sheet)
- Sometimes it is necessary to obtain a surgical lung biopsy under general anaesthetic

What is the treatment?

- Sometimes this condition will pass by itself, but in almost all cases some treatment is necessary
- The usual treatment is with prednisone (please see 'Prednisone' information sheet) to dampen down the body's immune system for a period of time
- Prednisone is usually extremely effective at curing the condition
- Sometimes it may also be necessary to stop medications that may be causing the condition

How long does treatment need to be taken for?

- The duration of treatment varies with different people, however most will need to have treatment for at least 3 to 6 months
 - Typically, a high dose of prednisone is started initially and this dose is gradually reduced over the period of treatment
 - In most cases, after successful treatment the condition does not recur
 - sometimes the condition will 'flare up' once lower doses of prednisone are commenced, and a longer treatment period will be necessary
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Is there anything else that will help me get better?

- Some regular exercise will help improve your fitness and breathlessness
- Regular exercise is extremely important as you start to recover from the condition, as during the illness you will lose your general fitness, and may be breathless even doing very little
- It is important that you also have the influenza vaccine ('fluvax') every year, and the pneumonia vaccine ('pneumovax') every 5 years