

Severity of COPD

Determining Disease Severity

- Disability in COPD can be poorly reflected in the FEV₁. A more comprehensive assessment also includes:
 - degree of airflow obstruction and disability
 - frequency of exacerbations
 - prognostic factors such as breathlessness (assessed using the Medical Research Council [MRC] scale), carbon monoxide lung transfer factor (T_LCO), health status, exercise capacity, BMI, partial pressure of oxygen in arterial blood (PaO₂) and cor pulmonale.
- Investigate symptoms that seem disproportionate to the spirometric impairment using a CT scan or T_LCO testing.
- Calculate the BODE index (BMI, airflow obstruction, dyspnoea and exercise capacity) to assess prognosis (where the component information is currently available).
- Assess severity of airflow obstruction using table 1.

		NICE clinical guideline 101 (2010)
Post-bronchodilator FEV ₁ /FVC	FEV ₁ % predicted	Post-bronchodilator
< 0.7	≥ 80%	Stage 1 – Mild*
< 0.7	50-79%	Stage 2 – Moderate
< 0.7	30-49%	Stage 3 – Severe
< 0.7	< 30%	Stage 4 – Very severe

Severity	FEV ₁ % of Predicted	Read Code
Mild	FEV ₁ ≥ 80%	H36
Moderate	FEV ₁ 50-79%	H37
Severe	FEV ₁ 30-49%	H38
Very Severe	FEV ₁ < 30%	H39