Here are some tips that could help you on your trip if you are travelling with COPD.

**Planning:** Since difficulty breathing is a hallmark of COPD, many people affected by it may be reluctant to travel far from home. The key to travelling with COPD is in the preparation, particularly if you use oxygen. Therefore, last minute deals are not a good idea - plan your trips at least 4 to 6 weeks before you travel. Always seek medical advice before you book your holiday. Get the names of local doctors, hospitals, and clinics where you can get help if needed – your own doctor or healthcare provider may be able to help you here. Make sure the holiday providers at your destination understand your COPD and special requirements.

**Fit to Fly:** Some airlines require medical certificates confirming that a patient is currently stable and fit to fly - your GP can advise you on this. The amount of oxygen in an aircraft can be 15% (compared to 21% on the ground). This fall in the level of oxygen can be quite dramatic for patients with COPD and may lead to increased shortness of breath, wheezing, light headedness, chest pain, and lack of oxygen as demonstrated by blue lips and/or finger nail beds. A fit to fly assessment can help identify those people who may develop such problems.

**Oxygen:** You should check specific airport and airline regulations on oxygen prior to travel and see if they will allow you to carry a portable oxygen concentrator on board. You may not be allowed your normal oxygen on the flight due to a change of altitude and cabin pressure which increases the risk of any pressurized container exploding, but airlines may provide supplemental oxygen. Book direct flights whenever possible as this eliminates the need to have oxygen during layovers. Always be sure to arrive at the airport early.

**Drink lots of fluids:** The air on the plane tends to be dry and you don't want the lining of your respiratory tract to get dehydrated.

**Cruise:** Check with your cruise company in advance of making your booking about your oxygen requirements. Provide the cruise line with a letter from your doctor. Include a brief medical history, and be sure your doctor provides a current prescription for oxygen as well. Most cruise ships are accommodating as long as they have advance notice you will be onboard.

**Travelling by car:** Keep the windows closed to avoid fumes from the traffic. Place your oxygen upright in the seat beside you. If you can, secure the unit with a seat belt. If you have extra oxygen units, place them on the floor behind the front seats. Plan your route for times when the roads won't be congested.
**Medication:** Check how much medication you will need to last through your trip. When possible, carry a water bottle with you so that you always have a drink available to take your medications. Remember you may need a Doctor's letter to accompany your medication.

**An adequate supply of oxygen:** If you use oxygen, check if your current oxygen prescription needs to be adjusted for the extra activity. Your supplier may be able to provide you with compressed portable oxygen supplies for use in an emergency. Many oxygen-supply companies have outlets across the country and can arrange to have oxygen delivered to your destination when you arrive. Check how long your portable oxygen cylinder will last and know what to do in an emergency. Always carry a spare oxygen cylinder in case of unexpected delays while travelling.