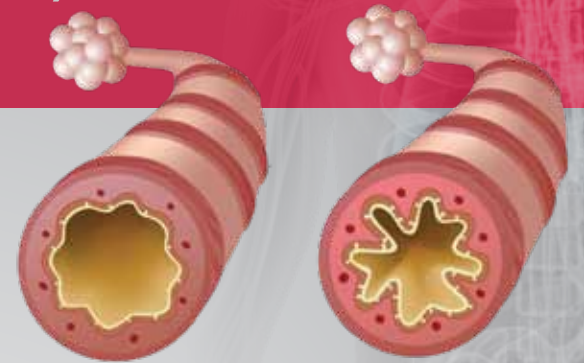


# COPD

(Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease)

Patient Information



## What is COPD?

COPD is a group of chronic progressive lung diseases that are characterized by diminished airflow, making it difficult to breathe.

In COPD, the following can occur and cause obstruction to airflow:

- Airways and air sacs become less elastic
- Walls between the air sacs are destroyed
- Walls of the airways become thick and swollen
- Airways are filled with mucus, which can clog them

## What are symptoms of COPD?

Signs and symptoms may be mild at first and become more severe over time.

They may vary and include:

- Shortness of breath
- Persistent (chronic) cough
- Coughing up mucus/phlegm
- Wheezing — a whistling or squeaky sound



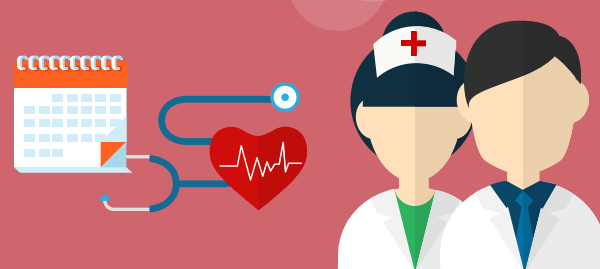
## What causes COPD?

- Cigarette smoking and secondhand smoke
- Air pollution
- Genetic factors
- Workplace or environmental exposure to dust or chemical fumes



# How is COPD diagnosed?

- An evaluation by a doctor may include a breathing test and possibly a chest x-ray.
- The doctor will perform a physical exam and ask about your medical history.



# How is COPD controlled?

- Your doctor may prescribe inhalers and other medications to control your COPD.
- People with COPD should get the pneumonia vaccine and an annual flu vaccine. Other vaccines also may be recommended by your doctor.
- Oxygen therapy may be prescribed. Oxygen is administered through tubes in your nose or through a mask over your mouth and nose.



# Lifestyle modifications

- Quit smoking. Talk to your doctor if you need help.
- Eat a proper, well-balanced diet.
- Exercise regularly. Talk to your doctor about physical activity that is safe for you.
- Avoid places where you may inhale dust, fumes, or other toxic substances.
- Work with your doctor to create and follow a treatment plan. Know what medications should be taken daily and what to do in case of emergency.



This information is intended for general reference only and is not a substitute for professional medical advice.



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