

BRIGGS[®]

CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE

PATIENT EDUCATION GUIDE

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Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease Patient Education Guide

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Purpose: This booklet is for informational purposes only and is not designed to replace your physician's advice or treatments. The information contained in this booklet may change as practice guidelines change.

Disclaimer: We have attempted to make the information contained in this booklet as accurate as possible; however, MedForms makes no guarantees as to its accuracy and assumes no liability for the use of its forms and publications.

Research Resources: Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, American Lung Association, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Environmental Protection Agency

SECTION 1. The Disease Process

More than 15 million adults in America are known to have COPD and an estimated 24 million U.S. adults have evidence of impaired lung function, indicating an under diagnosis of COPD. COPD is the second leading cause of disability among Americans and the third leading cause of death.

COPD includes a group of diseases that cause a blockage of air flow and breathing-related problems. COPD includes, but is not limited to, chronic bronchitis and emphysema. Air flow is obstructed with both of these diseases, interfering with normal breathing. Usually, a person with COPD will have both conditions, and in some cases asthma.

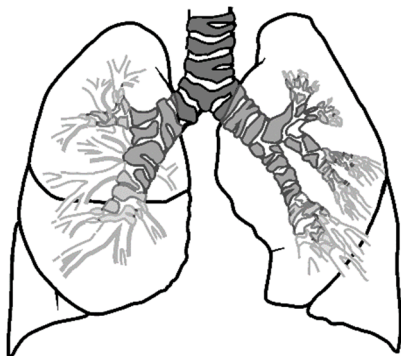
Living with COPD is hard work; however, there are ways you can improve your breathing and feel better. With proper medication, rehab and the right attitude, most patients can regain some lost function and enjoy a happier, more productive life.

Surgery or drugs won't cure COPD. Since you are not going to find a magic medicine or a quick fix from an operation, your improvement will have to come from learning as much as possible about your disease and from doing the work required. It is also important to remember there are no two COPD patients that are alike.

CAUSES OF COPD

Smoking is the most common cause of COPD. Smokers make up between 85-90% of all COPD cases. Smokers are 12 times more likely to develop COPD than non-smokers. Other causes include frequent lung infections and exposure to certain industrial pollutants.

HOW HEALTHY LUNGS WORK

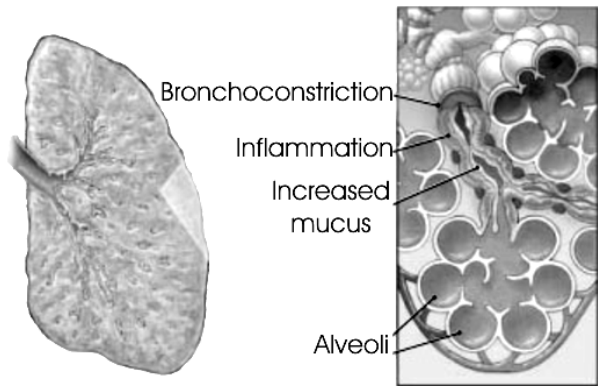


When you breathe in, the lungs bring fresh cool air that is rich in oxygen to your bloodstream. When you breathe out, you remove water and warm air that is high in a waste product known as carbon dioxide.

As you breathe in, your chest and lungs expand and fresh air enters your lungs. As you breathe out, your lungs return to a smaller size. This pushes the stale air out of your lungs.

WHAT IS CHRONIC BRONCHITIS?

Chronic bronchitis is an inflammation of the lining of the bronchial tubes. Eventually, scarring of the bronchial tubes occurs, causing the airways in your lungs to become narrow and partly clogged with mucus. The chronic inflammation of the bronchial tubes increases the chances of bacteria or viruses causing an infection of the bronchial tubes. If you develop an infection, the inflammation of your bronchial tubes and symptoms of your chronic bronchitis will worsen.



Symptoms of chronic bronchitis include:

- Chronic cough
- Increased mucus
- Shortness of breath
- Frequent clearing of the throat

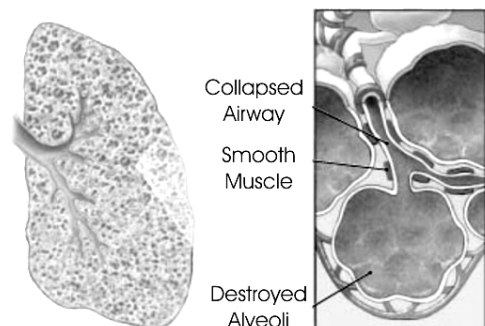
WHAT IS EMPHYSEMA?

Emphysema causes the walls between the air sacs of the lungs to lose their ability to stretch and contract. They become weak and break, resulting in permanent holes in the tissues of the lower lungs. The elasticity of the lung is lost and air is trapped in the air sacs. The air sacs are no longer able to push stale air out of your lungs and bring in oxygen to your bloodstream, resulting in shortness of breath. Obstruction of airflow also occurs due to the airway's loss of support. Emphysema causes permanent lung damage.

The disease is diagnosed through pulmonary function studies and other tests, physical examinations and medical history.

Symptoms of emphysema include:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Limited exercise tolerance



There is also a condition known as alpha-1-antitrypsin deficiency-related (AAT) emphysema. This condition is hereditary and is caused by a lack of the protein alpha-1-antitrypsin (AAT) or alpha-1-protease inhibitor, a lung protector made by the liver. This condition is found mostly in Americans of northern European descent between the ages of 20-40. Diagnosis is made through blood tests.

SECTION 2. Managing COPD

Managing COPD will reduce symptoms and improve how you feel. It is very important to follow the instructions given to you by your doctor and other members of your health care team.

STOP SMOKING

Effects of Smoking: Smoking causes the following to occur:

- The lining of the lungs' airways become inflamed, dry and sore.
- You breathe in nicotine, tar and poisonous gases like carbon monoxide and higher than normal concentrations of carbon dioxide.
- Nicotine makes the blood vessels smaller, which reduces the flow of oxygen.
- Cigarette smoke changes the enzyme balance of the lungs, leading to destruction of lung tissue that occurs in emphysema.
- The tiny little hair-like cleaners (cilia) in your airways that help clean out dirt and mucus become paralyzed and sometimes killed from the gases. This makes your lungs unable to clean out dirt and mucus, and results in clogged airways.
- Lung infections occur more often since old mucus is a perfect place for bacteria to grow.
- You feel tired and short of breath since your blood is robbed of oxygen by the carbon monoxide (a poisonous gas).
- As the air sacs stretch and break, you get less and less oxygen into your bloodstream and your condition keeps getting worse.

If you have been smoking for years you may think you will never be able to quit. This will have to be your decision. You may ask yourself, "Why stop now? The damage is already done?" Keep in mind, the minute you quit smoking, your body goes to work to repair the damage to your airways. If you want healthier lungs, **you must quit smoking!**

People who smoke say they smoke for stimulation, handling the cigarette, relaxation, help for tension, craving and habit. You will need to find substitutes for cigarettes if you use them for relaxation, stimulation or simply something to do with your hands and find new ways to cope with tension, craving and habit.



This file is just a small sample of this booklet

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