

# COPD

## Facts about Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease



*Don't Feel Guilty ∞  
You Can't Do It All!*

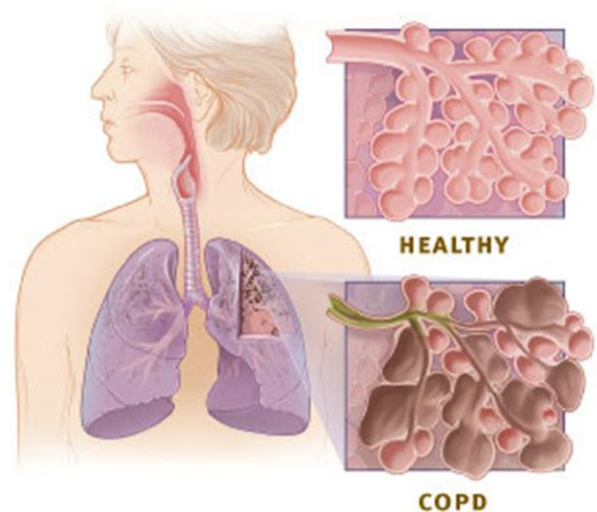
### What is COPD?

COPD stands for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. It's a chronic lung condition that gets worse over time. COPD actually includes one or both of these respiratory ailments:

**Chronic bronchitis** – resulting from constantly inflamed and irritated airways in your lungs

**Emphysema** – resulting from damage to small air sacs and airways in your lungs

When you have COPD, your lungs don't function properly. The airways – the tubes that carry air in and out of your lungs – are partially blocked. This makes it difficult to get air in and out.



### COPD Symptoms

COPD symptoms can be debilitating, and often prevent sufferers from participating in daily routines, or doing things they enjoy. Common COPD symptoms include the following:

- Constant coughing, also called "smoker's cough"
- Shortness of breath while doing activities
- Excessive sputum production
- Feelings of not being able to breathe
- Inability to take a deep breath
- Wheezing

### Caring For COPD Patients

Patients with COPD may experience rapid changes in their status requiring immediate attention. Depending on the stage and severity of symptoms, treatments can include common inhalers, nebulizer treatments, or oxygen therapy. Caretakers should pay careful attention to environmental triggers, such as dust, second-hand smoke, or high ozone levels, that may cause respiratory symptoms. Monitoring and eliminating these triggers is essential.

In addition, physicians will often recommend exercise routines to improve respiratory status. Caretakers play an important role in encouraging, assisting with, and monitoring these activities.

### Need more information?

COPD Foundation  
[www.copdfoundation.org](http://www.copdfoundation.org)

National Heart Lung and Blood Institute  
[www.nhlbi.nih.gov](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov)

U.S. National Library of Medicine  
[www.nlm.nih.gov](http://www.nlm.nih.gov)

COPD International Support Network  
[www.copd-international.com](http://www.copd-international.com)