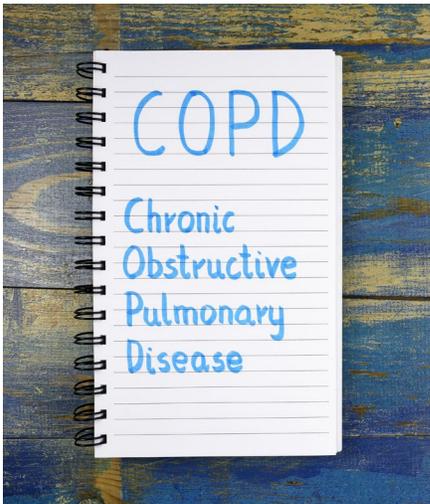## What is COPD?

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, or COPD, is a lung disease that causes airway blockages making breathing difficult. COPD is also known as emphysema or chronic bronchitis.

Who is at risk?

Millions of people are diagnosed with COPD in the United States every year, but estimates show many people do not know they have the disease.

People most at risk for COPD:

- 65 and older
- American Indian/Alaska Natives and multiracial non-Hispanics
- Women
- Unemployed, retired, or not able to work
- Less than a high school education
- Divorced, widowed, or separated
- Current or former smokers
- History of asthma

What are COPD Symptoms?

COPD Symptoms include:

- Frequent coughing
- Extra phlegm or mucus
- Shortness of breath
- Feeling tired after light activity
- Wheezing, whistling, or squeaking when breathing
- Chest tightness
- Difficulty taking deep breaths

What causes COPD?

- Smoking
- Secondhand smoke
- Long-term exposure to air pollutants like dust, fumes, and chemicals (which are often work-related)
- Respiratory illness like asthma
- Genetic conditions

COPD Actions You Can Take

Get Tested

Spirometry is an easy test that checks for COPD. Spirometry finds out the amount and speed of air that leaves the lungs. The test also shows if there are any airway blockages. Get tested early by a doctor, which could help lessen symptoms and change COPD development.

Seek Treatment

COPD is not curable, but it is treatable. Visit your doctor or healthcare provider regularly.

Treatment Benefits:

- Symptom relief
- Decreased events of symptoms suddenly getting worse
- Improved exercise ability
- Improved overall health
- Preventing and treating complications

Types of Treatment

- Act to limit or prevent COPD
- Get enough calories through diet
- Talk with your doctor about the best way for you to be physically active
- Medicines such as bronchodilators and steroids
- Get a flu shot every year. Consider getting a pneumonia vaccine
- Pulmonary rehabilitation
- Oxygen Therapy
- Surgery

Act to Limit or Prevent COPD

- Quit smoking. Go to Smoke Free or get information on quitting smoking.
- Avoid second-hand smoke.
- Avoid air pollutants at work and home. Go to AirNow for your area's air quality.