

The Basics

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a common progressive and treatable disease that decreases lung function. Typically a combination of emphysema and chronic bronchitis, COPD can be experienced by some people in conjunction with asthma-like symptoms.

With emphysema, lungs lose some of their elasticity, which prevents the proper exchange of air. It also damages the blood vessels that let oxygen into the bloodstream. Chronic bronchitis can swell the airways and produce large amounts of mucus. Trapped mucus makes airways more susceptible to infection.

COPD mostly affects men and women over the age of 40. Though most often caused by smoking, dusts such as coal and silica, indoor air pollution from fuel burning and childhood respiratory infections also are linked to COPD. Common symptoms include:

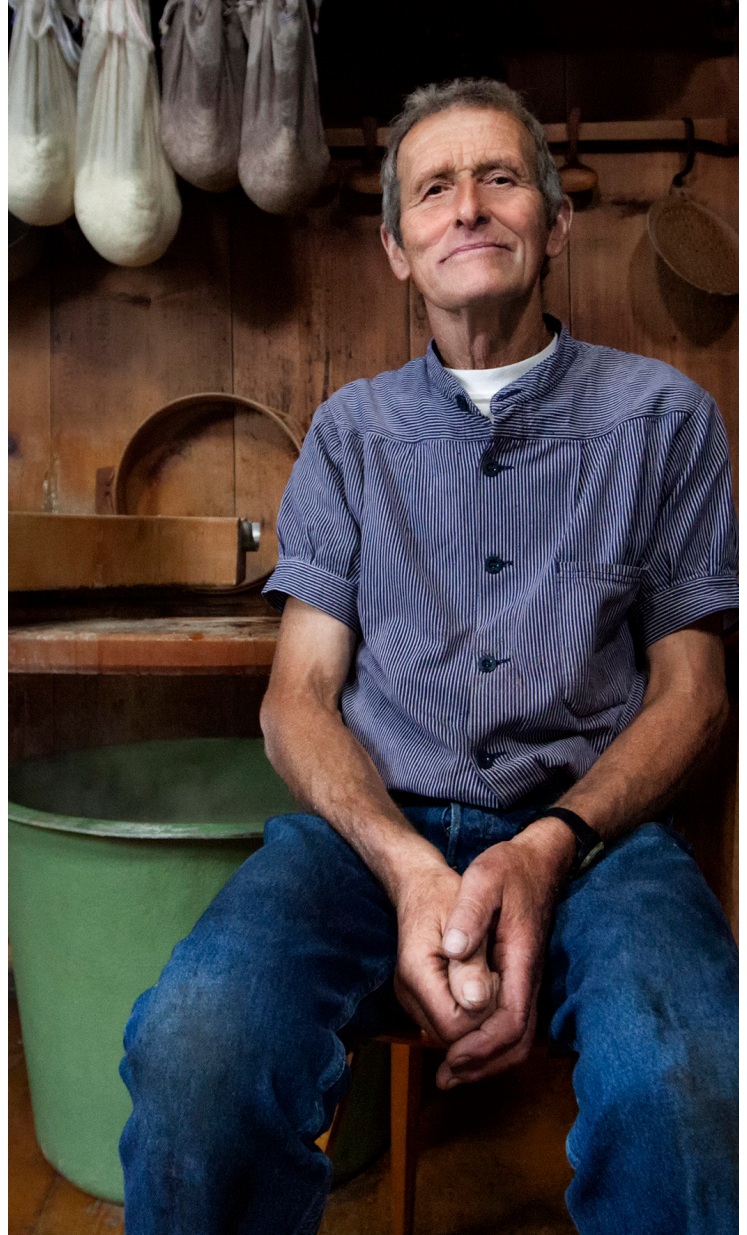
- Shortness of breath, especially with activity
- Coughing, with or without mucus
- Frequent colds and nose and throat infections

There is no cure for COPD, but many symptoms can be relieved through lifestyle changes, exercise, controlled breathing, and medication.

Ask for Answers

Asking the right questions can make all the difference. Partner with your doctor to get the answers and advice you need.

- What medicines are available for people with COPD?
- What factors contribute to COPD?
- What is pulmonary rehabilitation?
- What other diseases are people with COPD at risk for?
- When is oxygen therapy needed?



What's Next?

If you have COPD, making some lifestyle changes can help.

- **Quit smoking.** It's the leading cause of COPD, so quitting can help alleviate symptoms immediately
- **Stay up to date** with flu and pneumonia shots. People with COPD are very susceptible to illness during flu season. In addition to annual flu shots, avoid illness by washing hands frequently
- **Learn** about inhaled medicines, expectorants, steroids and other treatments that can help alleviate symptoms of COPD. Ask your doctor which are best for you and how to use them correctly
- **Control** weight, exercise and eat well. These can help improve lung function while also reducing the risk of other diseases
- **Reduce** stress with yoga or meditation, music or even just thinking positively
- **Ask** your doctor about increasing your oxygen levels through pursed lip breathing, diaphragmatic breathing and oxygen therapy

Taking Medicine

Inhaled medicines can relax tight muscles and decrease swelling in the airways, opening your airways and making it easier to breathe. These medicines are available as metered-dose inhalers, dry-powder inhalers or liquid nebulizers.

Oral medicines in tablet form work to open the airways by relaxing the muscles around them. These medicines include expectorants, steroids and antibiotics.

Did you know?

COPD can cause heart strain, which increases the risk of heart disease. Making the lifestyle changes described in the "What's Next?" section above can help strengthen your heart and lungs.

"Flare-ups," or the sudden worsening of COPD symptoms, can occur as a result of infections, air pollution or even extreme hot or cold weather. Help prevent flare-ups with lifestyle changes, by using medication correctly and by utilizing a pulmonary-rehabilitation program.

Pulmonary rehabilitation can help control or reduce breathlessness. A pulmonary-rehabilitation program includes exercise training, nutrition advice, reducing and controlling breathing problems, education on maintaining and improving lung function, help with smoking cessation, coping ideas and emotional and psychological support. Discuss it with your doctor.

Get Support

Here are some resources where you can find more information on COPD and the lifestyle changes that can help you manage it.

COPD Alliance

www.copd.org

Tools and resources to help patients learn to live with COPD

National Business Coalition on Health

www.nbch.org/COPD-Information-and-Resources-2

Support and information for managing COPD

American College of Chest Physicians

www.copd.org/sites/default/files/living_well_brochure_june_2012.pdf

A workbook to help patients understand their COPD

MedlinePlus®

<http://medlineplus.gov>

Information and resources about COPD and other diseases

About Mylan Plus

At Mylan, we are working to provide 7 billion people access to high quality medicine. We also provide access to the information you need to take medicine with confidence. Mylan Plus guides are our way of helping you and the people you care for make sense of health care challenges. Because Our Mylan Is Your Mylan.