

What Is COPD?

If you've been diagnosed with COPD, learning more about it can help you feel better—both physically *and* mentally.

COPD stands for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease. This long-term lung disease makes it hard to breathe.

Symptoms usually start slowly and get worse over time. Common symptoms include: an ongoing cough, a cough that produces a lot of mucus, shortness of breath, wheezing or a whistling sound when you breathe, chest tightness, and fatigue.

Most people with COPD have a combination of 2 conditions: emphysema and chronic bronchitis.

Emphysema is when the air sacs in your lungs become damaged, making it harder for the lungs to push air out of your body.

Chronic bronchitis is when your airways become swollen and clogged with mucus. This usually happens from repeated irritation from cigarette smoke or air pollution.

If you smoke cigarettes, quitting is the best thing you can do to prevent COPD or to stop it from getting worse more quickly.

Besides quitting smoking, you can do many other things to help you breathe easier with COPD. And your care team is ready to show you how!

Consider asking about: Treatment options, like medicines or pulmonary rehab.

Lifestyle changes that can improve your symptoms, like staying active.

And emotional support resources, like support groups to connect you with others going through a similar experience.

Your care team is here to support and guide you on your way to feeling better.