

What is COPD?

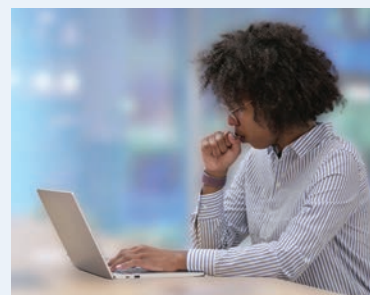
Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or COPD is a progressive disease that damages the lungs and airways and makes it hard to breathe. It includes emphysema and chronic bronchitis.

Over 12 million Americans have COPD, and millions more are living with COPD but do not know it.

Who is at risk of developing COPD?

Anyone can develop COPD; but people aged 40 or older, and current or former smokers have a higher risk of developing the disease.

One in four people who develop COPD never smoked. Other risk factors include secondhand smoke, air pollution, workplace exposures to dust and fumes and a genetic condition called alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency (AATD).



I have a cough that will not go away, should I worry about COPD?

Not everyone has the same COPD symptoms. Talk to your healthcare provider if you have:

- trouble keeping up with your peers because you are **short of breath**
- to pause and catch your breath on a flight of stairs or take the elevator to avoid **chest tightness**
- **repeated chest infections** like bronchitis or pneumonia
- a frequent **cough** that may bring up sputum (phlegm or mucus)

There is no cure for COPD, but it is treatable.

What should I do if I have signs and symptoms of COPD?



1. Do not delay talking to your healthcare provider about your symptoms or COPD risk factors.
2. If your provider thinks you may have COPD, you will be asked about your medical history, complete a physical exam and perform a lung function test called spirometry. The results of the spirometry test can determine if you have COPD.
3. The earlier you are diagnosed with COPD, the sooner you can start treatment, which may prevent further lung function loss.

Learn more by calling our Lung HelpLine at 800-LUNGUSA or visiting Lung.org/COPD

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