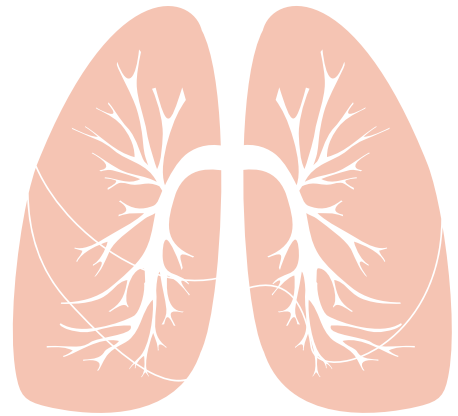


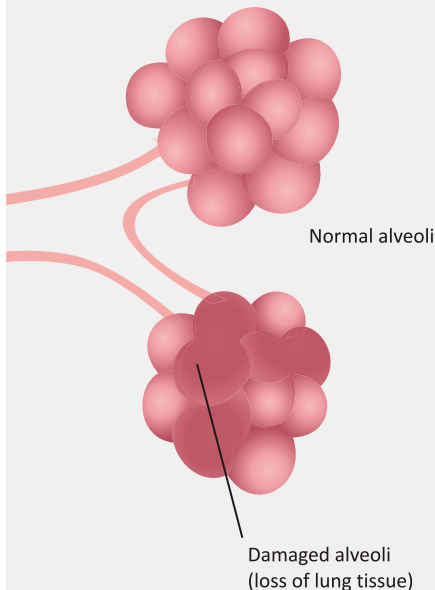
COPD

What is COPD?

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is a lung disease that makes it difficult to breathe. The term COPD is often used to describe progressive lung diseases such as “chronic bronchitis” or “emphysema”. In people with COPD, the airways (branching of the lungs that carry air within) become narrow, making it difficult to empty air out of the lungs. This obstruction (narrowing of the airways) makes people feel out of breath and tired. COPD can be a serious illness, it does not have a cure and progresses over time. But there are treatments that can help.



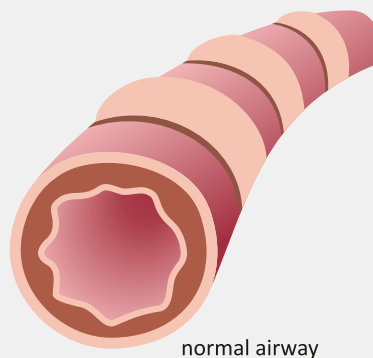
Emphysema



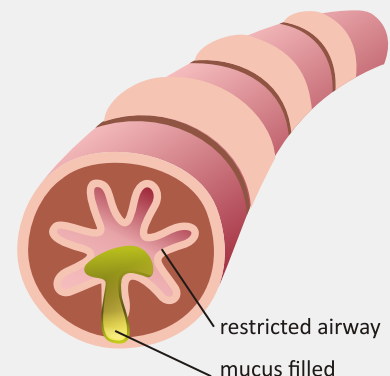
Why did I get COPD?

Smoking cigarettes is the most common cause of COPD. People can also get COPD from environmental factors, such as breathing in toxic fumes and gases, as well as indoor and outdoor air pollution. In rare cases, COPD is caused by a genetic factor. A blood test can check for this.

Normal Bronchus



Chronic Bronchitis



What are the symptoms?

At first, COPD often causes no symptoms. As the disease progresses, it can make you:

- Feel short of breath, especially when you are moving around.
- Cough and spit up phlegm (mucus)
- Wheeze (a whistling or squeaking noise as you breathe)

Is there a test for COPD?

Yes, your doctor can have you a complete test called “spirometry” to check for COPD. During spirometry, you will be asked to take a deep breath and then blast out as fast and as hard as you can into a mouth-piece. A machine connected to the mouth-piece measures how much air you can blow out and how fast you can blow. The test helps your doctor know if your symptoms are caused by COPD or another lung disease such as asthma.

What can I do to feel better?

The two most important things you can do are:

1.STOP SMOKING!

If you smoke, the most important thing you can do is stop smoking and avoid exposure. It does not matter how long you have smoked or how much you smoke, quitting will slow your disease process and help you feel better.

2.Get the flu shot every Fall and the pneumonia vaccine at least once.

Infections like the flu and pneumonia can be very hard on your lungs. It is important to prevent infections that can aggravate COPD.

How is COPD treated?

There are 4 main types of treatment for COPD:

1.Medicines

There are lots of medicine to treat COPD. Most people use inhalers that help widen the airways (bronchodilators) and reduce swelling in the airways (anti-inflammatory drugs, such as steroids). Often people use more than one inhaler at a time.

2.Oxygen

If the disease gets worse, you might need to use supplemental oxygen. Your doctor or healthcare provider can test your blood oxygen to see if you need this. You may also perform a hall-walk test, where the healthcare provider will monitor your oxygen saturation. If your oxygen saturation drops below normal levels, the appropriate level of supplemental oxygen will be determined.

3.Pulmonary rehab

In pulmonary rehab you learn exercises and ways to improve your breathing. Exercise and breathing techniques can help ease your symptoms. Even without pulmonary rehab program, staying active can help your breathing.

4.Surgery

VERY RARELY people with severe COPD will have surgery to remove damaged parts of their lungs. This surgery may reduce symptoms, but is not appropriate for everyone.