

Talking About COPD



Taking an active role in your health is important.

Talking with your healthcare professional is a great first step to learning about and coping with COPD.*

Before your appointment

Be prepared for your visit. Here are a few things you can do to help you get the most out of it:

- Make a list of all symptoms you have and any changes in your general health
- Jot down important personal details. Has a major life change happened since your last visit?
- Write down your medical history. Have you had recent surgery? Which medications are you taking?
- Consider bringing a loved one or a friend with you. A relative or friend can provide support and help you remember things you might forget

What to expect during your appointment

If your healthcare professional thinks you may have COPD, he or she may recommend a test called spirometry (spy-rom-ih-tree) that measures the health of your lungs.

- You may also be given other tests, like a chest x-ray or a blood test
- You will have the chance to ask your healthcare professional your questions
- You can talk to him or her about quitting smoking
- Your healthcare professional may explain things that can help you breathe better, like taking your medications or doing pulmonary rehabilitation (pull-muh-nair-ee ree-huh-bil-i-tey-shun)

After your appointment

Here are some tips to help you live better with COPD:

- Stop smoking
- Take your medicine as directed by your healthcare professional
- See your healthcare professional regularly
- Exercise regularly and keep your body strong. Eat healthy foods
- If your breathing gets worse, go to your doctor or to the hospital immediately
- Avoid smoke and fumes that make it hard to breathe. Keep the air clean at home

*COPD stands for chronic (kron-ick) obstructive (ob-struck-tiv) pulmonary (pull-muh-nair-ee) disease, including chronic bronchitis (brank-eye-tis), emphysema (em-fuh-zee-muh), or both.

Talking About COPD

Talk it over

If you have COPD, there are steps you can take to manage your health. Here are a few things you might want to ask your healthcare professional:

What can I do to keep my COPD from getting worse?

What should I do if I have a flare-up?

What signs of a flare-up should I watch out for?

Should I make any changes in the medicines I take?

What else can I do to reduce my COPD symptoms?

How can I stop smoking?

Do I have other conditions?

What can I do to avoid other illnesses?

Should I get a flu shot or a pneumonia (noo-moan-ya) shot?

Here are some organizations that can provide you with more information about COPD:

COPD Foundation
www.copdfoundation.org

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI)
1-301-592-8573
www.nhlbi.nih.gov

National Emphysema Foundation
1-203-866-5000
www.emphysemafoundation.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
1-800-232-4636
www.cdc.gov

Pulmonary Education and Research Foundation
www.perf2ndwind.org

Your COPD medicines

Talk to your healthcare professional about what medications may be right for you. He or she may give you:

- A “rescue” medication to help you breathe better whenever you have difficulty breathing or when your breathing suddenly becomes worse
- A maintenance medicine that you need to take every day
- A steroid (stare-oyd) or an antibiotic (an-tie-by-ah-tik)

Ask your healthcare professional:

How do I take my medication?

When and how often should I take my medication?

Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, Inc. has no ownership interest in any other organization that advertises or markets its disease management products and services. A patient educational resource provided by Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, Inc.