

COPD and Smoking

COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) includes two main conditions - chronic bronchitis and emphysema. Both of these damage the lungs and make it hard to breath.¹ Tobacco smoking is the main cause of COPD in the U.S. Other causes may include cigar smoke, secondhand smoke, air pollution, and workplace dust or chemicals.¹

COPD Conditions¹

Most people with COPD have both:

- Chronic bronchitis - airways are swollen and a lot of mucus forms
- Emphysema - the air sacs in the lungs become floppy and causes shortness of breath

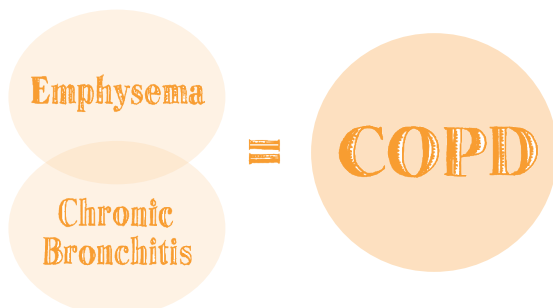
Signs of COPD

Early on, there may be no symptoms, or mild symptoms like:^{1,2}

- Lots of mucus that doesn't go away, often first thing in the morning
- Nagging cough (often called "smoker's cough")
- Shortness of breath, mostly with physical activity
- Wheezing or whistling when breathing
- Chest tightness
- Frequent lung problems

When COPD is worse, symptoms may include:^{1,2}

- Blue or gray lips or fingernails (a sign of low oxygen levels in the blood)
- Weight loss
- A very fast heartbeat
- Trouble catching breath or talking



Living with COPD

There is no cure for COPD, but there are things that can make life easier:^{1,2}

- Avoid contact with dust, chemicals, smoke, fumes or air pollution
- Talk with a doctor about:
 - Medicines for COPD
 - Pulmonary rehab to help with exercise, breathing, and diet
- Ask friends and family for help with daily activities
- Seek emergency care if you have a very fast heartbeat, shortness of breath, or trouble talking
- Stay away from secondhand smoke
- If you smoke, it's important to quit!

Benefits of Quitting Smoking

Quitting smoking cannot reverse the damage to the lungs, but it can:³

- Prevent COPD from getting worse
- Decrease shortness of breath, coughing, sinus problems, and feeling tired
- Allow lungs to work better

Remember

Call 1-800-NO-BUTTS for help to quit smoking!

¹ NIH. National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. COPD. Retrieved on 4/28/18 from <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/copd>

² CDC. Smoking and COPD. Retrieved on 4/28/18 from <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/diseases/copd.html>

³ National Emphysema Foundation. The Benefits of Quitting Smoking. Retrieved on 4/28/18 from <http://www.emphysemafoundation.org/index.php/healthy-habits/quitting-smoking/92-quitting-smoking-articles/149-the-benefits-of-quitting-smoking>