

Living With COPD

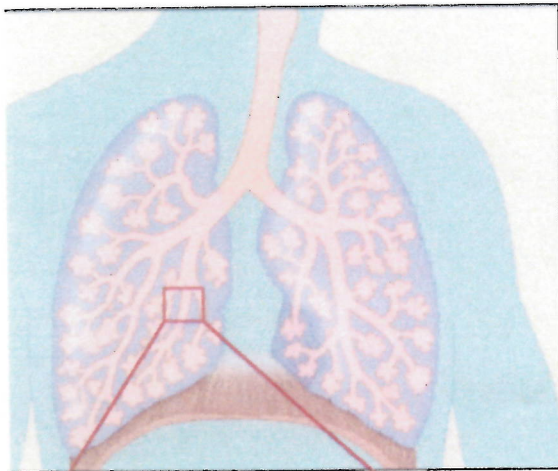
What is COPD?

COPD* is a disease that affects your airways and air sacs.

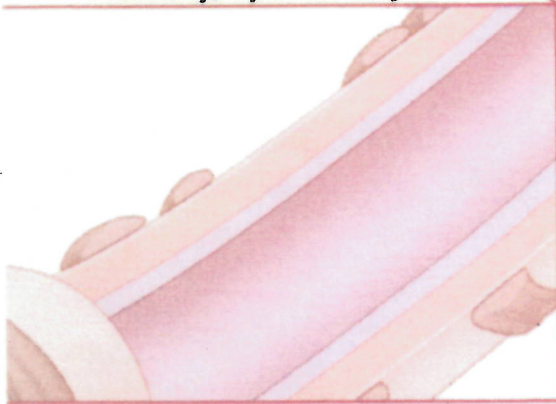
When you have COPD, there are changes in your lungs. These changes affect your normal breathing and cause less air to flow in and out of your lungs.

Breathing can become more difficult because:

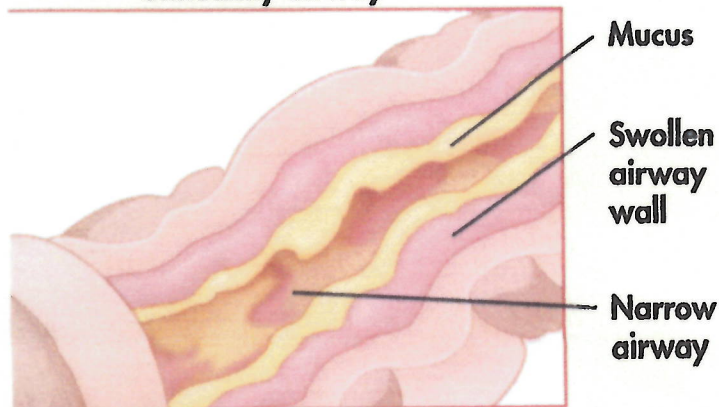
- Your lungs have trouble pushing "used" air out
- Your lungs may not have enough room left to take in fresh air



Healthy, open airway



Unhealthy airway



WITH EMPHYSEMA

- The air sacs at the ends of your airways are damaged. They lose their shape
- This breakdown can reduce the exchange of carbon dioxide for oxygen in your lungs
- Your blood may not get enough oxygen. And you have to work harder to get rid of the carbon dioxide

WITH CHRONIC BRONCHITIS

- The walls inside your airways become swollen and thick
- Your airways can become narrow
- Large amounts of mucus can form
- Your airways can get scarred over time, which can limit airflow

How Does COPD Affect You?

When you have COPD, you may have to work harder to breathe. While symptoms may differ from person to person, you may have one or more of the following:

- Shortness of breath
- Frequent cough with or without mucus
- Wheezing
- Fatigue (getting tired easily and often)

Tips for managing COPD:

- Stop smoking
- Take each medicine as you are told to and see your healthcare professional as he or she recommends
- Go to the hospital or your healthcare professional right away if your breathing gets bad
- Avoid things like smoke that make it hard to breathe

For more information and support, contact these helpful resources:

COPD Foundation
www.copdfoundation.org

Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (GOLD)
www.goldcopd.com

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-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)

Pulmonary Education and Research Foundation
www.perf2ndwind.org

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