

What is COPD?

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (**COPD**) is an umbrella term used to describe a progressive lung disease whereby the airways become inflamed and blocked. Although it may also include a couple of “lesser known” illnesses, it “usually” encompasses Emphysema, Chronic Bronchitis, and sometimes Chronic Asthma. Many people have more than one component.

What does COPD Mean?

Chronic: *It Doesn't Go Away*
Obstructive: *Partially Blocked*
Pulmonary: *It's in the Lungs*
Disease: *It's an illness.*

The common characteristics of COPD is difficulty breathing (shortness of breath) and/or a cough that doesn't go away.

Not Just Current or Former Smokers Can Develop this Disease!

Although smoking accounts for 80-90% as the main cause of COPD, some people with the disease have never smoked.

Environmental and industrial pollutants, (i.e. long term exposure to some dusts and fumes) can lead to COPD. Air pollution from some fuels used for cooking and heating in poorly vented dwellings, outdoor air pollution and second hand smoke, can also contribute. Early childhood respiratory infections are also associated with reduced lung function and increased respiratory problems in adulthood which can predispose a person to COPD.

There is also a rare, inherited form of emphysema known as Alpha 1 Antitrypsin deficiency which can easily be tested for by your doctor.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE!

Canada's 2005 published number of "diagnosed" patients in Canada was reported to be in excess of 750,000. However; a recent survey done by the Lung Association puts that number at 1.5 million patients, with another 1.6 million individuals who may have COPD but haven't been diagnosed or may not be aware they have it.



Do Not Assume your shortness of breath is due to your age, physical condition or weight.

A simple non invasive test, called Spirometry, which measures your breathing (lung capacity), can diagnose COPD. **ASK YOUR DOCTOR** about this test; especially if you are, or were, a smoker.

- ◆ **Ask Questions**
 - ◆ **Seek Answers**
 - ◆ **Learn About COPD**
- By doing so you will be able to help yourself, your family and your Doctor.



There are medicines (some old stand-by's and newer generation drugs) that can help control the symptoms of COPD. Don't suffer in silence. There's no need for it!

COPD Symptom Checker

Adapted from GOLD's website (*Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease*)

- ⇒ Are you, or were you, a smoker?
- ⇒ Do you cough frequently?
- ⇒ Do you bring up mucus?
- ⇒ Do you get short of breath easily or more than others your age?



⇒ Are you over 40?

If you answered yes to 3 or more questions, please talk with your Dr. He/she may suggest you take a simple breathing test called Spirometry. Ask about it.

It's Simple, Painless & Non Invasive!

This disease can be managed....But; you have to be willing to make that commitment.

Where do you begin?

By learning as much as possible. We hope that **COPD Canada Patient Network** copdcanada.ca will be your start.

The website is open to all but we invite you to become a member. Membership is FREE and comes with benefits! Receive newsletters, discounts, COPD Information, special offers, interact with others and more!

COPD Canada Patient Network



A registered, tax deductible charity

To learn more about Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease and COPD Canada Patient Network

visit our website www.copdcanada.ca
or
e mail us at
Contact@copdcanada.ca

Our website complies with the HONCode Standard for Trustworthy Health Information

Head Office Mailing Address:
COPD Canada Patient Network
3047 Old Sambro Rd.
Williamswood NS BEV 1E6

Local Contact:

***Have a COLLECTIVE voice
& JOIN US!!!
Together We CAN!***

www.copdcanada.ca

Are You Short of Breath? Perhaps You Cough a LOT?

Don't "assume" it's your age, your weight, or being out of shape.

It Could Be COPD!


