

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)



Up to 24 million Americans show impaired lung function, which is common among those with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), the third leading cause of death in the United States. More than 12 million Americans have been diagnosed with COPD, while an estimated 12 million more have it, but have not been diagnosed.

COPD, also known as emphysema and chronic bronchitis, is a lung disease characterized by an obstruction to airflow that interferes with normal breathing and over time makes it very difficult to breathe. COPD is not curable; however it is preventable, and can be treated and managed effectively, particularly when the disease is diagnosed early. People at risk of COPD, especially current and former smokers with COPD symptoms, should consult their physicians about a spirometry test in order to diagnose the disease as early as possible and begin treatment.

The primary cause of COPD is the inhalation of cigarette smoke. Other causes include exposure to occupational dust particles and chemicals, as well as a rare genetic mutation called Alpha-1 Antitrypsin Deficiency.

Signs and symptoms of COPD include:

- Constant coughing, sometimes called "smoker's cough"
- Shortness of breath while doing everyday activities
- Producing a lot of sputum (also called phlegm or mucus)
- Feeling like you can't breathe or take a deep breath
- Wheezing

If you are a current or former smoker and/or have any symptoms of COPD, get tested as soon as possible. The test, called spirometry, is simple and quick. If someone you love is a current or former smoker with symptoms, urge them to get tested too.

**If you would like more information, please contact
Med-Cert, Inc. at 866-633-2378 (toll free) or at www.medcertinc.com**



MED-CERT
Medical Management Resources
Guiding your way to better health management