

LUNG DISEASE

Don't let it stop you from enjoying life.

Ever feel like you can't get enough air? Millions of Americans live with that feeling every day because they have chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). It is caused by severe lung damage, usually from smoking.

COPD causes partial obstruction of airflow to and from the lungs, making breathing and normal activities difficult. It can lead to chronic bronchitis and emphysema. Quitting smoking is essential or COPD can progress faster.

Reversing lung damage is difficult but you can control the symptoms, which include shortness of breath, chronic cough, bouts of bronchitis, and fatigue.

Your provider may advise:

Medication and oxygen therapy as needed to reduce coughing and make breathing easier.

Protection from everyday lung hazards such as secondhand smoke, fumes, smog, dust, and respiratory infections; flu and pneumonia shots are essential.

Good health practices including weight control, proper nutrition, and moderate physical activity within limitations prescribed by your provider.

Don't give in – if you have lung disease, protecting your general health can improve your energy and quality of life.

TIP: Breathing in fresh air, breathing out, it's a function of life. Breathing becomes increasingly hard with **emphysema**, the gradual loss of lung elasticity usually caused by smoking. Treatment may slow progression or reduce symptoms, provided smoking stops.

Exercise can ease nicotine cravings during smoking cessation. A brisk 30-minute walk daily can moderate physical discomfort, fatigue and negative emotions. Regular exercise also boosts energy and raises metabolism to counter weight gain.

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