

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE

What is COPD?

- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) damages the lungs and the tubes that carry air from the nose and mouth to the lungs.
- COPD makes you cough and bring up mucus. It makes it hard to breathe and do the things you want to do.

How can you prevent COPD?

- Cigarette smoke is the most common cause of COPD. Stopping smoking can keep you from getting COPD.
- If you already have COPD, stopping smoking can keep it from getting worse.

How is COPD treated?

- Some people with COPD need medicines to open the airways. Most medicines are given by inhalers that deliver the medicine to the lungs in spray form.
- Sometimes antibiotics are needed to fight infections that make COPD worse.
- It is important to exercise and keep active.
- Some people need extra oxygen when COPD keeps them from getting enough.

How to Use an Inhaler

1. Take off the cap and shake the inhaler hard.
2. Breathe out all the way.
3. Hold the inhaler about 2 fingerwidths from your mouth.
4. Start to breath in slowly through your mouth as you press down on the inhaler once and keep breathing in slowly until you can't breathe in any more.
5. Hold your breath and count to 10 slowly.
6. Repeat steps 1 to 5 if your doctor has prescribed more than 1 puff of medicine, wait about 1 minute between puffs.

Web Sites with Good Information about COPD

MedlinePLUS

www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/copdchronicobstructivepulmonarydisease.html#cat1

American Lung Association

www.lungusa.org/site/pp.asp?c=dvLUK900E&tb=23050

International COPD Coalition

www.internationalcopd.org/materials/professionals/default.asp