

COPD

COPD, or Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, includes chronic bronchitis, emphysema, or other diseases of the lungs that get worse over time, with symptoms such as coughing, shortness of breath, wheezing, chest tightness, and fatigue.

Spirometry or other lung function tests, radiological imaging, such as x-rays and chest CT scans, and arterial gas blood tests that measure oxygen in the blood can help doctors diagnose COPD. Avoiding cigarette smoke, air pollution, chemical fumes, and dust, which have all been linked to COPD, is critical to managing symptoms. Oxygen therapy, medications, surgical procedures such as lung volume reduction and lung transplants, or bullectomy (removing large air sacs pressing on healthy lungs in patients with emphysema) may provide pathways to relieve symptoms, but currently, there is no cure.

Seven to 10 million Americans are diagnosed with COPD each year, and Alabama has one of the highest rates of COPD in the nation: almost 10% of adults 18 years and older were living with the condition in 2011, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Complying with modern-day treatment regimens does make a difference. Men are living longer with COPD; the CDC noticed a significant decline in health rates for COPD in men from 1990 to 2010. Women with COPD have yet to demonstrate such a decline, though one hopes the 2020 survey shows similar positive findings.



<https://www.lungmds.com>

