

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is a chronic lung disease that, over time, makes it hard to breathe. You may also have heard COPD called by other terms, such as emphysema or chronic bronchitis.

The green, yellow and red zones show some of the symptoms of COPD. Determine what zone best describes your current symptoms and follow the “What To Do” for that zone. Symptoms of COPD can change quickly so it is important to monitor how you are feeling, especially if you notice a change.



SYMPTOMS

- Usual activity and exercise level
- Usual amount of coughing phlegm/mucus
- Good/normal appetite
- Good/recommended sleep
- No cough, wheeze, chest tightness, or shortness of breath

WHAT TO DO

- Take your controller medication(s) daily.
- If you smoke, ask for help on how to quit
- Stay up to date on your flu/pneumonia shots
- Use oxygen as prescribed, if applicable
- Maintain a healthy diet and healthy eating habits



SYMPTOMS

- More breathless than usual
- Less energy for daily activities
- Increased and/or thicker & discolored mucus
- Increased coughing/wheezing
- Increased need for a quick-relief inhaler or nebulizer
- Difficulty sleeping due to breathing difficulty

WHAT TO DO

- Call your doctor, who may prescribe medication, like a steroid, to help keep you out of the hospital.
- Continue to take your controller medication(s) daily.
- Use your quick-relief inhaler or nebulizer for your shortness of breath.



SYMPTOMS

All symptoms in YELLOW zone, PLUS:

- Severe shortness of breath, even at rest
- Unable to do any activity or sleep due to breathing difficulty
- Fever or shaking chills
- Confused or very drowsy
- Chest pain or chest feels very heavy or tight
- Coughing up blood

WHAT TO DO

- **Get help NOW!**
- Call 911 or go to your nearest emergency room.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO STAY HEALTHY?

Visit your primary doctor or lung specialist at least two times a year, even if you feel fine. Be ready to discuss:

Symptoms:

- Talk about how often you have symptoms and what triggers them.
- Review your daily activity and mention any changes in energy level, breathing or difficulty sleeping.
- Make sure you know the early warning signs of a lung infection and what to do if you have one.

Medications:

- Bring a list of all medications and dosages, including over-the-counter and herbal treatments.
- Understand what your medicines are, how to use them properly and what results to expect.

Lung Function:

- Ask your doctor about a spirometry test, which measures the function of your lungs. Anyone diagnosed with COPD should have a spirometry test.

TALK WITH A HEALTH COACH

Health coaches are registered health professionals such as nurses, dietitians and respiratory therapists who follow national disease management guidelines to educate members about their disease, appropriate lifestyle modifications and self-monitoring skills.

Call 1-800-501-3439, Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. to speak with a health coach and to find out more about managing your COPD.

IF YOU SMOKE, QUIT NOW

A smoker is 10 times more likely to die of COPD than someone who doesn't smoke. 80-90 percent of those who die from COPD-related deaths are smokers. The benefits of quitting are huge. The single most important thing you can do to slow down the progression of COPD is to quit smoking. No matter how long you have smoked, your health will get better when you quit. After 1 to 9 months of smoking cessation, your coughing, sinus congestion, fatigue and shortness of breath decrease. Quitting smoking has been shown to help people with COPD live longer. Quitting smoking is easier with help.

Contact the New York State Smokers' Quitline

1-866-NYQUITS (1-866-697-8487) – Toll Free

Visit www.nysmokefree.com

Learn more about COPD

VISIT THE AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION WEBSITE

www.lung.org/lung-health-and-diseases



Independent Health is a Medicare Advantage organization with a Medicare contract offering HMO, HMO-SNP, HMO-POS and PPO plans. Enrollment in Independent Health depends on contract renewal. Benefits vary by plan.

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