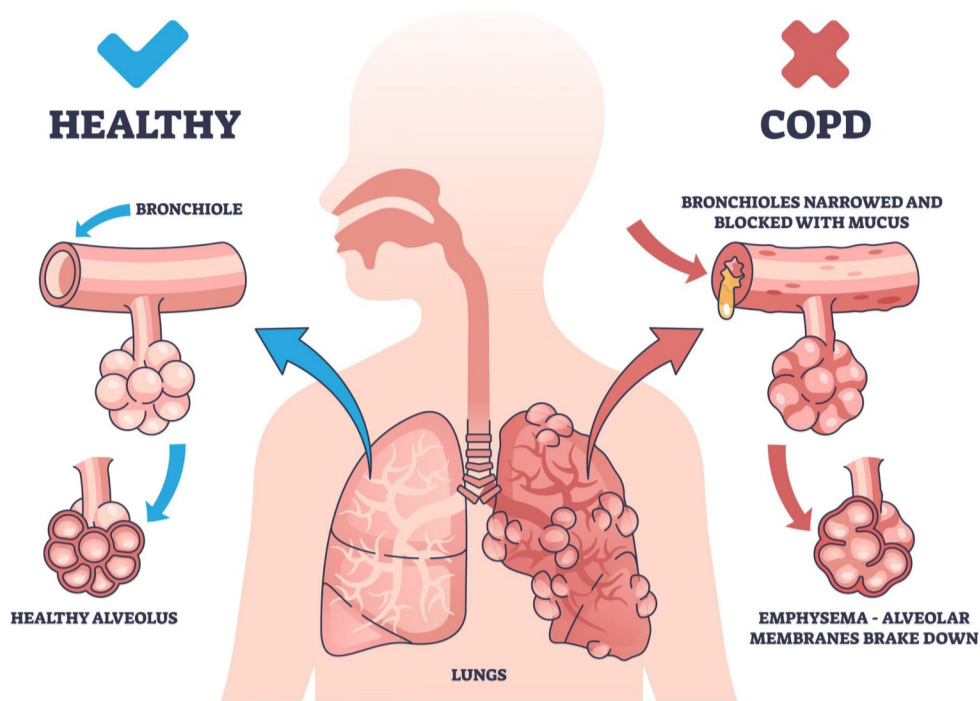


COPD: What You Should Know

Information for residents and families going home



What Is COPD?

COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) is a lung condition that makes breathing harder. It does not go away, but you can manage symptoms at home.

COPD can cause:

- Shortness of breath
- Coughing (with or without mucus)
- Wheezing
- Feeling tired or low on energy

Avoid Common Triggers

Some things can make breathing worse. Try to avoid:

- Smoke and dirty air
- Strong smells or chemicals
- Dust, mold, or pet hair
- Cold air or fast weather changes
- Colds or flu

Medications for COPD

Common COPD medications may include:

- **Inhalers** (used every day or when needed)
- **Nebulizer treatments**
- **Oral medications** (pills)

Common medication names you may hear:

- Albuterol
- Spiriva
- Advair
- Symbicort

Do not skip doses, even if you are feeling better.

Healthy Habits at Home

- Do not smoke or vape
- Get recommended vaccines
- Eat healthy meals and drink fluids as directed
- Stay active as you are able

Follow-Up Care

- Keep all follow-up appointments
- Bring a list of your medications to each visit
- Ask questions if you are unsure about your care
- Call your provider if symptoms worsen

When to Call for Help

Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you notice:

- Breathing gets worse
- You cough more or have more mucus
- Mucus changes color
- You have a fever
- Your rescue inhaler is used more often

Call 911 right away if you have:

- You cannot catch your breath
- You have chest pain
- Your lips or nails look blue or gray
- You feel confused or very sleepy
- Your rescue inhaler does not help

Breathing Technique

This breathing technique can help reduce shortness of breath:

Pursed-lip breathing

- Breathe in slowly through your nose
- Breathe out slowly through pursed lips (like blowing out a candle)
- Use this during activity or when you feel short of breath



Saving Your Energy

Managing your energy can help prevent breathing problems.

- Take breaks and avoid rushing
- Sit when possible during daily activities
- Spread tasks throughout the day

Rescue Inhaler

Use your rescue inhaler if you have:

- Sudden trouble breathing
- Wheezing or chest tightness

Call your provider if you need it more often.

Questions or Concerns?

If you have questions about your COPD care, contact your healthcare provider.

This handout is for education only and does not replace medical advice.