Emphysema is one of the diseases that comprises COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease). Emphysema involves gradual damage of lung tissue, specifically thinning and destruction of the alveoli or air sacs.

**Key Facts**
- Air sacs are destroyed in emphysema, making it progressively difficult to breathe.
- Emphysema is usually accompanied by chronic bronchitis, with almost-daily or daily cough and phlegm.
- Cigarette smoking is the major cause of emphysema.
- People with emphysema experience shortness of breath with activities.
- It is not curable, but there are treatments that can help you manage the disease.