COPD is a lung disease that may be serious and may progress. It can make it difficult to breathe and get enough oxygen into the body and carbon dioxide out of the body. The two diseases that make up COPD are:

**EMPHYSEMA**
With emphysema, the air sacs and small airways are damaged and lose their elasticity. Air becomes trapped in the air sacs making it difficult to breathe in and out.

**CHRONIC BRONCHITIS**
With chronic bronchitis, the airways become swollen and inflamed and produce large volumes of mucus. This narrows or closes the airways making breathing difficult and leading to a risk of infections.

**SMOKING IS THE #1 CAUSE OF COPD**
Other causes:
- Secondhand smoke
- Work-related exposure to chemicals and dusts, such as coal dust or asbestos
- Indoor air pollution from fuels used for cooking and heating in poorly ventilated homes
- Genetics
- Excessive childhood respiratory infections

**COMMON COPD SYMPTOMS**
- Shortness of breath
- Frequent cough
- Cough with mucus
- Frequent colds
- Nose and throat infections
- Fatigue
- Blue lips or fingernails

COPD is a long-term disease that doesn’t go away and usually gets worse over time. That’s why it is important for you to seek out a health-care provider who can work with you to improve your breathing. Learn more by going to www.chestnet.org/copdinfo