COPD
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

What Is COPD?
COPD stands for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.
It is a form of irreversible damage to the lungs, most commonly from smoking, causing respiratory symptoms such as shortness of breath or cough. There is no cure for COPD, but the symptoms can be managed. COPD may present as chronic bronchitis or emphysema.

HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE COPD?
approximately 16 MILLION in the US
approximately 250 MILLION worldwide

HOW MANY DIE BECAUSE OF COPD?
over 150,000 deaths a year in the US
over 3 MILLION deaths a year worldwide
COPD is the 4TH LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH in the US.

WHAT IS AN EXACERBATION?
More than 41% of people have either not heard of the term “exacerbation” or are not sure what it means.
An exacerbation or lung attack is the worsening of COPD symptoms. Each time a person experiences an exacerbation, there is permanent loss of lung function.

CAUSES
Tobacco use
Tobacco use is responsible for 80-90% of COPD in the US.

Biofuel burning & air pollution
In the developed world, biofuel and air pollution exposure is thought to be the cause of COPD cases in people who have never smoked.

WHAT YOU CAN DO
1. STOP SMOKING
2. Stay active and EXERCISE
3. Speak up with your doctor
A recent survey found less than half of people with COPD have spoken with their doctor about their personal management goals.

FOLLOWING EXACERBATIONS AND HOSPITALIZATIONS
Make sure you take your medications.
See a doctor for close follow-up.
Talk to your doctor about exercise.

To learn more, go to chestfoundation.org/copd

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