

Creating A COPD Action Plan

Living with COPD can be hard. The good news is there is plenty of help available. Talk to your doctor or other healthcare provider to make a plan to treat your COPD.

A COPD ACTION PLAN IS A SIMPLE WAY TO KNOW WHAT TO DO EACH DAY, BASED ON HOW YOU FEEL. HERE'S AN EXAMPLE:

“I’m doing well today”—A good day could be getting enough sleep, having enough energy, or not coughing more than normal. Your plan for managing your COPD on a good day may include taking your medicine, using oxygen, and exercising.

“I’m having a bad day”—It’s also important to talk about what a bad day looks like. You might have less energy, more mucus, and a lower appetite. An action plan for these days may include using an inhaler or taking a different medication. It may require more rest. On these days, call your provider if things don’t improve.

“I need immediate help”—There may be times when you will need help right away, such as when you can’t catch your breath, even when resting; have fever or chills; or when you are coughing up blood. If this happens, your action plan is to call 911 immediately.

To download a COPD action plan to complete with your doctor, scan this code with your smartphone.

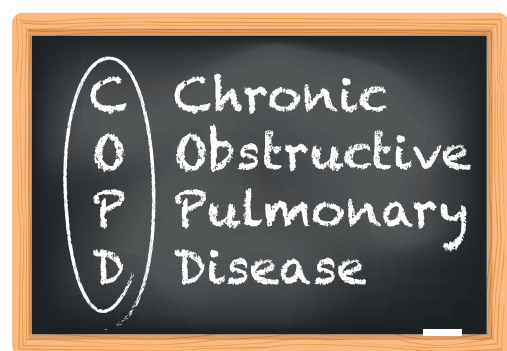


Reference: “COPD Management Tools.”
American Lung Association, .



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Roll up Your Sleeve

WHY YOU NEED AN EARLY FLU SHOT.

When you have a lung disease such as asthma or COPD, a yearly flu shot is vital. If you get the flu, you are at risk for complications, such as pneumonia, that can be serious or even life-threatening. That's true even if your COPD is well controlled. Here's why: COPD causes airways to swell and narrow, making breathing difficult. The flu virus increases this swelling, which can lead to pneumonia and other respiratory diseases. The flu can also make COPD symptoms worse.

A yearly flu vaccine is your best protection against these risks. Be sure to get your shot as soon as you can. It takes about two weeks after you're vaccinated for the shot to work, so it's best to get vaccinated in the early fall, before the flu season is at its height. Maybe you're worried the vaccine might give you the flu. Don't worry, that's a myth. The shot has only non-active flu viruses and these can't make you sick.

References: American College of Asthma, Allergy and Immunology; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



COPD and Smoking: It **IS** Possible to Quit

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is a group of diseases that can block airflow and cause breathing problems.

- > **Write a List**—list the reasons you want to quit. Look at this list when you need a boost.
- > **Set a Date**—choose a date and write it on your calendar.
- > **Enlist Support**—call your doctor and ask for help. Your doctor can tell you about programs in your area, medicines, gums, lozenges, patches, and sprays that can help treat your urge to smoke. Share your goal with friends or family members. These people can support you and help keep you on track.
- > **Prep Your Space**—before your quit date, throw away every cigarette in your house, car, and office. Toss every ashtray, lighter, and anything else you need to smoke. Clean your furniture and wash all of your clothes to help get rid of the smell.
- > **Make a Plan**—plan ahead for what you'll do when you get a craving. Have a healthy snack or sugarless gum handy when you feel like you want to smoke. Also, try to stay away from people and places that make you want to smoke.
- > **Reward Your Effort**—reward yourself for sticking to your goal! Consider saving the money you would have spent on cigarettes and use it to treat yourself to a trip or item you've wanted for a long time.

If you are a friend or loved one of someone with COPD who wants to quit smoking, support your loved one reminding them that it's their choice. Studies* have shown that demands from others to quit smoking can lead to continued smoking or a return to smoking after stopping. To achieve lasting change, it's important for a person to have the right motivation and outside support.

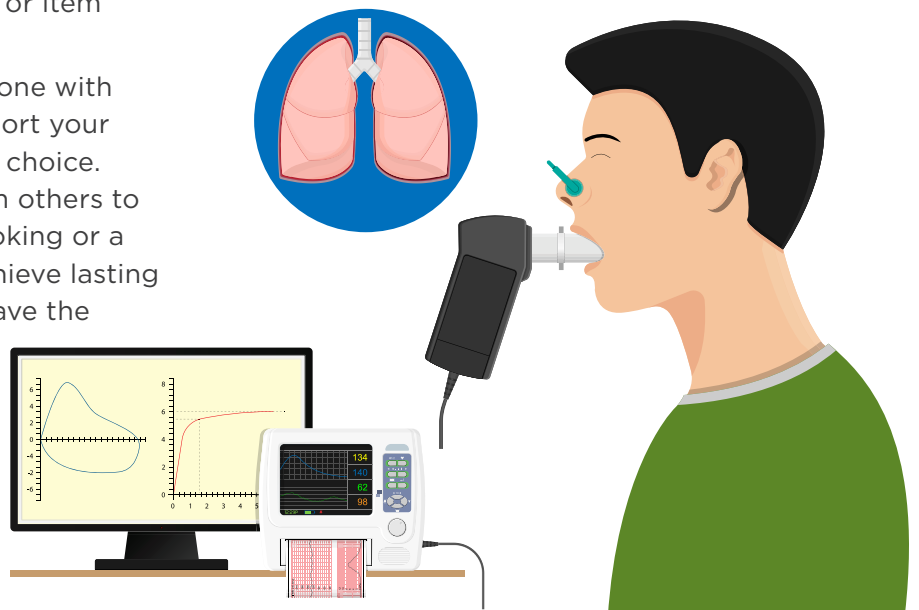
If you don't stop smoking the first time, that's okay. The more times you try to quit, the more likely it is that you will be successful.

References: Eklund, Britt-Marie, et al. "Why Do Smokers Diagnosed with COPD Not Quit Smoking? - a Qualitative Study." Tobacco Induced Diseases, BioMed Central, 22 Oct. 2012, tobaccoinduceddiseases.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/1617-9625-10-17; "Smoking and COPD." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 15 Feb. 2021, www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/diseases/copd.html; "Smoking and COPD." Mount Sinai Health System, www.mountsinai.org/health-library/special-topic/smoking-and-copd.

Breathing tests measure how well your lungs are working. The simplest breathing test is spirometry. This can be done in your doctor's office or in a hospital. Your doctor may also order more complex lung tests to get extra information about your lungs.

Reference: "Pulmonary Emphysema: Respiratory Care." Intermountainhealthcare.org, intermountainhealthcare.org/services/respiratory-care/conditions/pulmonary-emphysema/.

Do you have questions about your medication? Do you know if you're using your inhaler correctly? Talk to your doctor or pharmacist! They are a great source of help to answer your questions, and more.





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