

Do you know the causes, risk factors and symptoms of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)?

Causes	Risk Factors	Symptoms
Cigarette smoking (80%–90% of COPD patients are long-term smokers)	Smoking	Wheezing and coughing up clear sputum (mucus from deep in the lungs)
Inhaling toxins or other irritants	Long-term exposure to secondhand or passive smoke	Shortness of breath with activity, as well as overall shortness of breath
Genetic predisposition that can make a person's lungs more susceptible to damage from smoke or pollutants	Family member with COPD	Choking sensation when lying flat and desire to lean forward to improve breathing
Heavy exposure to air pollutants	Exposure to pollutants	Increased fatigue, weight loss and heart problems
Working in a dusty environment for many years	History of frequent childhood lung infections	Trouble concentrating

Home health care benefits for COPD patients

Skilled nursing can assess the patient's breathing ability, monitor compliance with medications, monitor oxygen saturation and lung sounds, and provide education on the management of oxygen levels and possible side effects of medications.

Physical therapy can recondition the patient's upper and lower body for endurance and strength.

Speech and occupational therapy can instruct the patient in breathing exercises.

Occupational therapy can teach the patient how to adapt the daily routine to conserve energy.

Dietitians can assess and educate the patient on individual calorie needs.

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