

# Understanding Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a long-term lung disease that makes it hard to breathe. It is almost always preventable and treatable.

Most people with COPD don't know it. About 15 million American adults have been diagnosed with COPD, but millions more have it and are undiagnosed.<sup>1</sup>

## Your primary care provider can help test for COPD.

Your doctor or advanced practice provider<sup>2</sup> can determine your COPD risk and diagnosis by measuring your breathing using spirometry. If you've been diagnosed with COPD, there are steps you can take to manage the early stages and have a good quality of life.<sup>3</sup>

### ✓ Practice breathing techniques

Your primary care provider can teach you ways to breathe more efficiently when you're short of breath.

### ✓ Stay up to date on vaccines

Flu, pneumonia, Covid-19, Tdap, and Shingrix will help prevent infections that can worsen COPD.

### ✓ Make exercise and healthy eating a habit

It may be difficult to exercise with trouble breathing, but regular exercise can strengthen respiratory muscles and support weight loss.

### ✓ Avoid smoke and air pollution

Do not smoke or vape and try to avoid places where others smoke to prevent lung damage.

### ✓ Stick to regular visits with your primary care provider

Regularly scheduled visits to see a physician or advanced practice provider can help prevent and manage COPD.

**"If you're going to treat a complex chronic illness like COPD, having a trusting doctor-patient relationship is essential."**



Dr. Troy Fiesinger,  
Village Medical  
Physician, on COPD

At Village Medical, we work to identify COPD early and help patients live their best lives through a personal, long-term approach to managing the condition. Our team works together to help you take control of your health and wellbeing.



<sup>1</sup> National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

<sup>2</sup> Advanced practice providers are defined as nurse practitioners and physician assistants.

<sup>3</sup> Mayo Clinic

To find the closest Village Medical practice to you, visit [VillageMedical.com](https://VillageMedical.com)

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