

# COPD

## Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

### COPD - Basics

- Chronic respiratory disorder that progresses slowly, characterized by an obstructive ventilatory pattern, leading to chronic respiratory failure
- Irreversible airflow limitation during forced expiration
- A mixture of three separate disease processes (chronic bronchitis, emphysema and asthma) that together form the complete clinical picture

### Symptoms

- Chronic cough or sputum production, wheezing, shortness of breath
- Progressive exercise intolerance
- Frequent and recurrent pulmonary infections

### Risk factors

- Smoking, occupational factors, air pollution



### Prevention strategies

- Quit smoking. Active smoking is the leading risk factor for COPD, making smoking cessation the most important step in prevention.
- Avoid exposure to environmental pollutants, including bacterial or fungal toxins, and organic particles like cotton or vegetable dust.
- Limit occupational exposure to industrial toxins. High-risk jobs include those in mining, smelting, the iron and steel industries, woodworking, and construction.
- Reduce indoor air pollution. Avoid smoke from cooking or heating—especially in poorly ventilated homes—as it can damage the lungs over time.
- Avoid household toxins. Choose non-toxic cleaning products to reduce exposure to harmful fumes and chemicals that can irritate the lungs.
- Support lung health with antioxidants. A diet rich in antioxidants—including vitamins C and E, and supplements like N-Acetyl L-Cysteine (NAC)—can help protect and improve lung function.