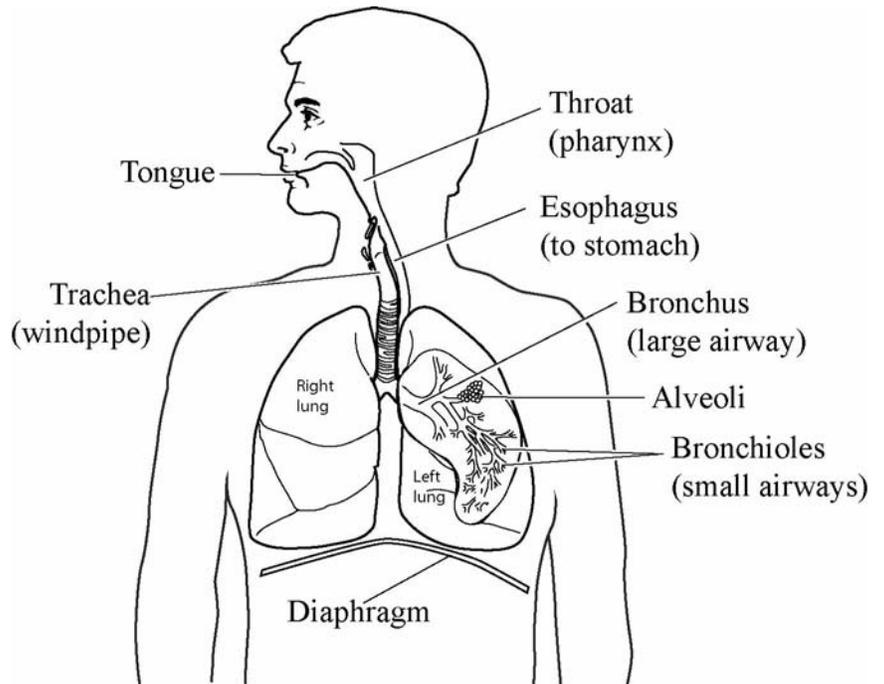


# Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

COPD is a common lung disease. There are 2 main types of COPD:

- **Emphysema** involves the alveoli or small air sacs being irritated. Over time the air sacs get stiff and will not let oxygen into and carbon dioxide out of your blood.
- **Chronic bronchitis** involves the large and small airways getting swollen and full of mucus. The mucus can block the airways and make it hard to breathe.



Many people with COPD have both types.

This disease develops over years. Treatment can ease signs and keep the disease from getting worse.

## Causes

The leading causes of COPD are:

- Smoking
- Working in a polluted environment where you breathe in large amounts of dust, fumes, smoke or gases
- Second hand smoke

## **Signs**

The signs of COPD are:

- Ongoing cough with or without mucus
- Wheezing
- Feeling short of breath that gets worse with activity
- Chest tightness

These signs can be serious enough to affect your daily activities.

## **Your Care**

Your doctor will do a medical exam and order tests such as:

- Pulmonary function test to see how well your lungs are working
- Chest x-ray
- CT scan
- Blood test

The damage to your lungs from COPD cannot be reversed and there is no cure. With the help of your health care team, you can manage the disease to slow its progress. To manage your COPD:

- Stay active.
- Quit smoking.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Eat a balanced diet.
- Drink a lot of fluids.
- Control stress.
- Take your medicines such as inhalers, steroids and antibiotics as ordered.
- Do home oxygen therapy if ordered.

- Attend a pulmonary rehab program to learn about COPD and exercise to improve your health.
- Get a flu shot each year and talk to your doctor about getting a pneumonia shot.
- Get treatment right away if you get a cold or other infection in your nose or lungs.

**Talk to your health care team about your questions and concerns.**

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