

Get the facts about COPD

(Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease)

MYTHS BUSTED

Only smokers get COPD.

FACT: 10% to 20% of people who get COPD have never smoked. Right now that number adds up to between 24,000 and 48,000 patients with COPD who never smoked.



COPD is a rare disease.

FACT: COPD is the third leading cause of death in the US, impacting roughly 24 million Americans.

I haven't got COPD. This is just a smoker's cough.

FACT: There is no such thing as a smoker's cough. If you're experiencing a recurrent and productive cough and/or sputum, you probably have an inflamed airway, which may be a sign of chronic bronchitis. If you have a persistent cough, see a qualified health-care provider.



I've smoked for more than 20 years. Stopping now won't make any difference.

FACT: When you stop smoking you achieve two benefits to counter COPD. First, you dramatically reduce your risk for a heart attack (myocardial infarction). Secondly, you increase your life expectancy, literally adding years to your life. So it's never too late to stop smoking to improve your health.

COPD only happens to old people.

FACT: COPD can occur at any age. While most people with COPD contract the disease in their 60s or later, it can occur as early as 40 and, in rare cases, even earlier.



There is no treatment for COPD.

FACT: COPD is a treatable condition and there are many options to help you manage the disease and feel better.

Getting started with oxygen therapy is a death sentence.

FACT: Many patients with COPD live more than 10 years while on oxygen therapy. With the latest, lightweight and portable oxygen concentrators, oxygen therapy no longer limits your mobility so you can continue activities outside of your home.



Don't let misconceptions about COPD prevent you from getting the support you need to improve your breathing. Learn more by going to www.chestnet.org/copdinfo

