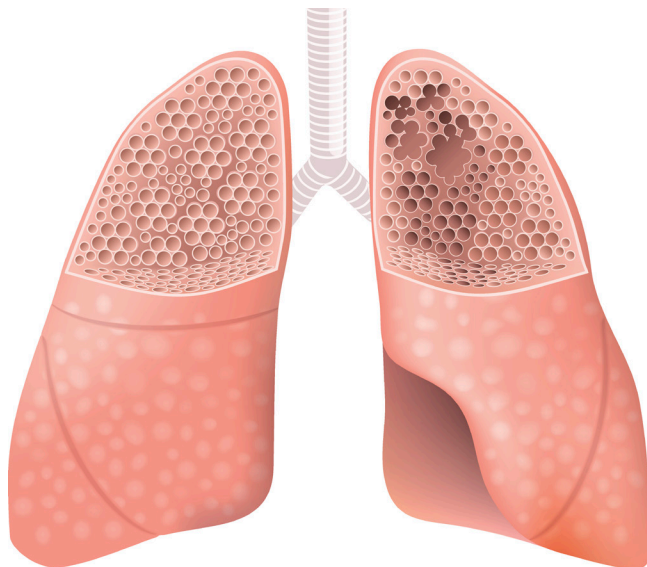


What is COPD?

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is progressive disease that affects how you breathe. Smoking is the leading cause of COPD. Air pollution, chemical fumes, dust or other lung irritants may contribute to COPD. The tubes in your lungs carry air in and out as you breathe. When you have COPD, the air sacs within your lungs lose their elasticity and the air is trapped inside making it harder to breathe out.

COPD also causes the walls of the airways become thick or swollen. This makes it easier for mucus to plug the tubes causing you to cough more. COPD gets worse over time. It may keep you from doing the things you enjoy. Working with your doctor can help.



Healthy lung

Lung with COPD

Tel-A-Nurse

For non-emergency healthcare, your first stop should be your primary care physician, who oversees your health needs. If you need non-emergency medical advice, nurses are available 24/7 with the Tel-A-Nurse chat line. Simply call 877-543-5061.

Geisinger Health Plan complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 800-447-4000 (TTY: 711).

注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 800-447-4000（TTY：711）。

Breathe easier

- Stop smoking and avoid second-hand smoke.
- Avoid breathing in things that affect your lungs like dust or heavy fumes.
- Keep your doctor appointments. Call your doctor between appointments if you are sick or having more trouble breathing.
- Get a flu shot every year. Ask your doctor if the pneumonia vaccine is right for you.

Stay active

Exercise may seem more difficult when you feel short of breath. However, it is an important practice to incorporate or maintain in order to prevent losing the conditioning that you already have. Exercise helps strengthen your respiratory muscles and can improve the use of oxygen and energy levels while reducing anxiety, stress and depression.

What to do when you get sick

Call your doctor when you start to feel sick. Not only will it help you recover sooner, it might help you stay out of the hospital.

Call your doctor when:

- It is harder to breath
- You are coughing more
- Your mucus has changed color or is thicker
- You have a fever

Get immediate help if:

- You're having trouble breathing and it makes it hard to move or talk
- Your heartbeat feels fast or irregular
- Your lips or fingernails are blue or gray



Take your medicine

Medications can help make it easier to breathe. Most medication for COPD comes in an inhaler. For best results, it is important to learn the right way to use the inhaler. Your doctor or case manager can help. It is also important to follow your doctor's directions. Everyone is a little different. Working with your doctor will help find a treatment plan that best fits you.

Bronchodilators are medicines that relax the muscles around the airways. This helps to open the airways, making it easier to breathe in and out. Steroids are another type of medicine given to people with COPD. They help control the swelling in the airways.

If you need to use your inhaler more than advised, call your doctor. It could mean you are getting sick or need to adjust your treatment plan.

Manage your breathing

If you start to feel tired or out of breath, sit down and try to relax. Breathing techniques can help you breathe better, improve your ability to move air in and out of the lungs and aid in moving trapped air out of your lungs. Your doctor or respiratory therapist can teach you special breathing exercises that can help.



If your COPD gets worse you may need to use oxygen to help you breathe. There is a lot to learn about using oxygen, such as safety measures, when to wear it and how much you need. Your doctor and respiratory therapist will guide you.

What is our mission?

Our mission is to help members be as healthy as possible. As a member, you can get expert help to better manage your condition – all at no extra charge. Participation is voluntary and in no way affects the status of your healthcare coverage.

Geisinger Health Plan believes our care coordination program can be beneficial in improving or maintaining your health.

How can I learn more?

To take advantage of this program, call 800-883-6355 or 570-214-8649, speak with your healthcare provider or visit us on the web at TheHealthPlan.com.

The program will:

- Help you better understand your condition
- Update you on new information
- Provide assistance from a nurse who is trained to help members with their specialized healthcare needs