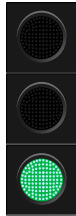


## Warning Signals for Emphysema/COPD

### *Green Light - Good Signs - All is Well!*



- ✓ Able to do normal activities
- ✓ No changes in your symptoms
- ✓ Usual medicines are controlling your symptoms

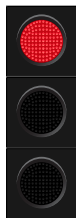
### *Yellow Light - Caution Signs - Time to Act!*



#### **Call your doctor if you have:**

- ✓ Increased shortness of breath with usual activity
- ✓ More than usual amount of coughing
- ✓ Increased wheezing
- ✓ Increased sputum or it has changed color
- ✓ Feeling more tired or restless

### *Red Light - DANGER Signs - STOP!*



- ✓ Severe shortness of breath
- ✓ Chest pains that don't go away
- ✓ Lips or fingernails that turn blue or gray
- ✓ Unusual sleepiness or confusion

**CALL YOUR DOCTOR RIGHT AWAY!!**



## What is COPD?

### The Lungs

- The job of the lungs is to fill our blood with oxygen and get rid of carbon dioxide when we breathe.
- The oxygen we breathe is absorbed into our blood through tissue in our lungs.
- Oxygen enters our lungs through airways when we breathe in and carbon dioxide leaves our lungs through the same airways when we breathe out.
- The airways get smaller and smaller the deeper you get into the lungs like branches of a tree.
- These airways produce mucus that protects the lungs from germs in the air.
- The lungs push mucous out with breathing and coughing.

### COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease)

- In healthy lungs airways are clear, open and strong.
- With COPD the lungs airways are weak and damaged.
- The walls of the airways can get thick and swollen.
- With COPD it is hard for the lungs to take in oxygen and let go of carbon dioxide.
- Breathing can be hard with COPD.
- Coughing and clearing the lungs can be hard with COPD.

### Circle true or false:

If I have COPD my lungs are weak and damaged. **T** **F**

The job of the lungs is to take in oxygen and get rid of carbon dioxide. **T** **F**



## What Causes COPD? (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease)

Emphysema is the most common form of COPD.

In healthy lungs, airways are clear, open and strong.

With COPD, the lungs' airways are weak and damaged.

Damage is caused by:

- SMOKING.
- Pollution and other things that can irritate the lungs.
- Severe lung infections.
- Genetic conditions.

Smoking, irritants and lung infections cause inflammation in the lungs.

The inflammation causes the airways to get thick and swollen.

Over time the walls of the airways become narrow and make it hard to breathe.

### Symptoms

When you have COPD you may have:

- A hard time breathing.
- Coughing with thick mucous.
- Wheezing in the lungs.
- Have difficulty catching your breath when walking or talking.
- Have frequent lung infections.

### Circle true or false:

If I have COPD my lungs are weak and damaged.      **T**      **F**

Smoking is the leading cause of COPD.      **T**      **F**



## Treatment of COPD: (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease)

Preventing COPD is better than having to treat COPD!

Avoid smoking and other irritants to lower the chance of damage to the lungs.

### Medicines

- Medicines that your doctor prescribes can work in different ways:
  - Bronchodilators open airways.
  - Steroids reduce inflammation.
  - Antibiotics reduce infection.
  - Breathing treatments or inhalers may be prescribed but are not used for all patients.
  - Mucous thinners and other medicines will be given if the doctor advises.
- Take all prescribed medicines as directed.
- If you have side effects, call the doctor before stopping the medicine.

Other treatments may include:

- Humidifiers.
- Oxygen therapy.
- Chest clapping.

### Circle true or false:

I should talk with my doctor before stopping any medicine.      **T**      **F**

All COPD patients have oxygen therapy.      **T**      **F**