



Tobacco Use and COPD

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a name for lung disease including emphysema, chronic bronchitis or both. COPD is caused by lung irritants in the air, including tobacco smoke. People with COPD have difficulty breathing, especially when engaging in physical activity. Without management, this disease gets worse over time.

Tobacco Use and COPD:

- Smoking is the most common cause of COPD, and causes as many as nine out of 10 COPD-related deaths.
- Smoking causes emphysema by damaging the air sacs of lungs.
- Smoking causes chronic bronchitis by damaging the airways of lungs.
- The term “smoker’s cough” refers to constant coughing due to frequent smoking. This can be a symptom of COPD.
- Symptoms of COPD such as shortness of breath, wheezing, coughing and excessive phlegm are often ignored, because people consider them a normal part of aging or being out of shape. However, these symptoms can be reduced by quitting smoking.
- Even if you don’t smoke, exposure to secondhand smoke can cause COPD.



“ If you are living with COPD, quitting smoking is the best thing you can do to improve your quality of life. Quitting smoking will slow the rate of lung function loss and make your treatment more effective. ”

— Marge Stoneking, Alaska Director, American Lung Association

Tips to Help You Quit

Why Should I Quit?

- Quitting smoking prevents additional damage to your lungs.
- While COPD does not have a cure, the symptoms of COPD can be reduced by quitting smoking. This can make everyday activities much easier and more enjoyable.
- Quitting smoking cuts down on secondhand smoke, leading to less lung irritants in the air. This helps prevent COPD for nonsmokers.

One of the recommendations for patients with COPD is to see your healthcare provider regularly, even if you are feeling fine. When you do so, talk to them and ask questions you have about quitting smoking.

How Do I Quit?

- Call Alaska's Tobacco Quit Line! The quit line is FREE for all Alaskans. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Quit line services include phone coaching sessions and free nicotine replacement therapy.
- Get support from friends and family. Ask Alaska's Tobacco Quit Line to send you the *Ally Guide*.
- Contact your healthcare provider to find the help you need to quit.
- Keep trying to quit! Most tobacco users make several quit attempts before staying quit for good.

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Everybody I've talked to at Alaska's Tobacco Quit Line has been friendly and helpful. I haven't smoked in over two months and I'm feeling great!”

— Alaska's Tobacco Quit Line Caller

ALASKA'S
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1-800-QUIT-NOW
IT'S FREE. IT'S CONFIDENTIAL. AND IT WORKS.

For more information, visit alaskaquitline.com

