

# LIFE & BREATH



Do you feel short of breath during activity or exercise?  
Are you coughing regularly without having a cold or allergies?  
You may be among the more than 16 million Americans who have chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or COPD—a condition that describes either chronic bronchitis or emphysema.

- Chronic bronchitis is an inflammation of the airways that causes scarring in the bronchial tubes and eventually interferes with the flow of air in the lungs.
- Emphysema is a more serious condition in which the air sacs (also called “alveoli”) in the lungs become over-inflated and eventually lose their elasticity, causing breathlessness and difficulty exhaling.
- Among the 2 million people with emphysema, men outnumber women by 22%—but the condition is becoming more common in women, especially those who smoke.
- Emphysema limits a person’s ability to perform normal daily activities—even walking around the house and yard require the ability to breathe comfortably!
- The first treatment of emphysema is to *stop smoking!*
- Establishing overall good health habits—e.g., proper nutrition, enough sleep and regular exercise—is the second most positive thing you can do to maintain healthy lungs.
- See your doctor if you experience persistent cough or breathlessness. S/he may save your breath and your life.

For more information about COPD ... ask your pharmacist!

Brought to you by your local pharmacist and prepared by the Michigan Pharmacists Association.

