

UNDERSTANDING YOUR CONDITION:

CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE (COPD)

What is COPD?

COPD is a disease that involves inflammation and thickening of the airways. It also involves destruction of the tissue of the lung where oxygen is exchanged.

Obstruction in COPD means that the flow of air in and particularly out of the lungs is not as good as it should be. When that happens, less oxygen gets into the body tissues, and it becomes harder to get rid of the waste gas, carbon dioxide. As the disease gets worse, it becomes more difficult to remain active due to shortness of breath.

COPD is sometimes referred to as either chronic bronchitis or emphysema.

SYMPTOMS:

Managing COPD requires you to pay close attention to your symptoms. Recognizing symptoms early is the best way to prevent complications and stay healthy!

- Chronic cough
- Shortness of breath while doing everyday activities (dyspnea)
- Frequent respiratory infections
- Blueness of the lips or fingernail beds (cyanosis)
- Fatigue
- Producing a lot of mucus (also called phlegm or sputum)
- Wheezing

MONITORING AND MANAGING SYMPTOMS:

COPD is a chronic disease that is often preventable and treatable. If you have COPD, there are steps to take to help cope with the lifestyle changes this disease brings.

- Take all medications as prescribed and directed. Never change medications or skip doses.
- Talk to your health provider about a Smoking Cessation plan. It is never too late to quit and to see improvement in your COPD symptoms.
- Ask your medical team about vaccinations like the pneumonia and flu shot to ensure you are up to date to avoid preventable infections.

- Remain physically active. A good goal is to maintain physical exercise as tolerated but at a level that does not increase your shortness of breath or cause breathlessness.
- Keep your follow-up appointments with your pulmonologist and Landmark provider, even if you're feeling healthy. Continued monitoring is very important!

Call Landmark first.
We answer 24/7.

We are available for urgent visits or to provide support over the phone. Call us if you:

- should experience any of the side effects listed above that do not resolve, or if you have a worsening of your baseline side effects,
- think there are any problems with your medication, even if they seem minor, or
- have any questions or concerns.