Fighting CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE (COPD) FLARE-UPS
A COPD flare-up means your COPD has gotten worse very quickly. This could be over the course of a few hours or days.

Did you know that COPD flare-ups cause your COPD to progress faster and shorten your life?

Managing your COPD means you may have a longer and more enjoyable life. Catch flare-ups early and take immediate action. Talk with your doctor today and develop a plan that works for you.
What are some warning signs of a flare-up?

- Wheezing or increased wheezing
- Coughing more often
- Shortness of breath
- Shallow or fast breathing with increased use of your chest muscles
- More mucus
- Yellow, green, tan or blood-tinged mucus
- Confusion or being very sleepy
- Swelling in your feet or ankles
- Fever
I’m having flare-up symptoms. What should I do?

Start treatment and get help right away! Your doctor will determine the best course of treatment. Most people who have a flare-up are given two types of medications.

These include:

- **Bronchodilators.** This medicine opens the airways in your lungs so you can breathe easier.

- **Corticosteroids.** This medicine is a steroid and it reduces the swelling inside your lungs so you can breathe much easier.

**How can I prevent flare-ups?**

- Take your breathing medications as prescribed.
- Create a **COPD action plan** with your doctor.
- Stop smoking.
- Get your flu and pneumonia vaccines to protect your lungs.
- Eat a well-balanced diet.
- Exercise to increase lung strength.
- Know the **air quality**, and stay indoors if needed.
- Get plenty of sleep.
Remember to use your inhalers properly!

Follow the instructions that come with your inhaler.

Always rinse your mouth after using an inhaler.

Your medicines are the key to keeping your COPD under control. Your lungs will get more oxygen and your lungs’ airways will be less swollen.
There’s support around you!

Join a local COPD support group.

Support Helplines

- American Lung Association Lung Helpline 1-800-586-4872
- COPD Foundation Information Line 1-866-316-2673

Support to Quit Smoking

- Tennessee Tobacco Quitline 1-800-QUIT NOW (1-800-784-8669)

Learn About Your Area’s Air Quality

- Download the American Lung Association’s State of the Air app at www.lung.org.