

Fast Facts

Emphysema

- Contributes to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- When the air sacs of the lungs (alveoli) become damaged and the inner walls of the alveoli weaken resulting in them rupturing creating larger spaces, which decreases the surface area within the lungs meaning less oxygen is able to be absorbed into the bloodstream
- When exhaling, the alveoli that are left aren't able to function correctly and air becomes trapped inside the lungs, so fresh air can't get into them
- Happens over time
- Cause is long-term exposure to airborne irritants, such as air pollution and chemical fumes/dust
- Primary cause for most people is tobacco smoke
- Severity of the condition being directly tied to the number of years and amount of tobacco smoked
- Symptoms often appear between the ages of 40 – 60

<i>Symptoms</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Prevention</i>
-Shortness of breath that appears with exertion and over time is present even at rest	<i>Goal:</i> Relieve symptoms and slow the progression <i>Medications:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Bronchodilators-Inhaled steroids-Antibiotics <i>Therapies:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Pulmonary rehabilitation-Nutrition-Supplemental oxygen-Counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Don't smoke-Avoid secondhand smoke-Wear a mask if you work in a job where you're exposed to chemical fumes and dust-Wear a mask to avoid air pollution-Replace the filters of furnace and air conditioner regularly

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