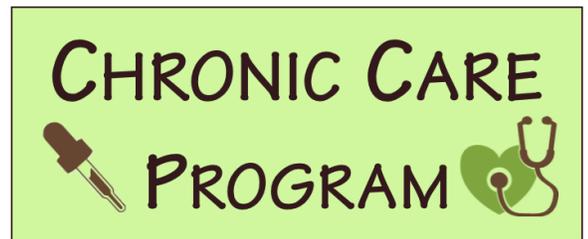


CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE (COPD) at a glance



What is COPD?

COPD is a progressive disease that makes it hard to breathe while doing daily activities like walking or cooking. In COPD, less air flows in and out of the airways in your lungs, making it harder to breathe.

“Progressive” means the disease gets worse over time. COPD develops slowly. Symptoms often worsen over time and can limit your ability to do routine activities. Severe COPD may prevent you from doing even basic activities like walking, cooking, or taking care of yourself.

Complications and Symptoms

At first, COPD may cause no symptoms or only mild symptoms, but as the disease gets worse, symptoms usually become more severe. Common signs and symptoms of COPD include:

- an ongoing cough, and a cough that produces a lot of mucus
- shortness of breath, especially with physical activity
- wheezing (a whistling or squeaky sound when you breathe)
- chest tightness

Severe COPD can also cause other symptoms, including weight loss, lower muscle endurance, and swelling in your ankles, feet, or leg.

Risk Factors

Most of the time, COPD is diagnosed in middle-aged or older adults. The disease isn’t passed from person to person—you can’t catch it from someone else.

The two big risk factors for COPD are: smoking and long-term exposure to lung irritants, including second-hand smoke, air pollution, chemical fumes and dust from the environment or workplace.

Prevention and Management

There is no cure yet for COPD, but action can be taken to slow down the progression of COPD. This includes:

- quitting smoking and avoiding lung irritants
- taking bronchodilators, which is a medicine that relaxes the muscles around your airways and makes breathing easier
- participating in physical activity to strengthen the muscles that help you breathe
- following an eating plan that will meet your nutritional needs. If you have COPD, you may have trouble eating enough because of your symptoms. As a result, you may not get all the nutrients you need, which can worsen your symptoms and raise your risk for infection.



In COPD, your lungs (pictured above) are damaged. Less air flows in and out of your airways. This makes it harder to breathe.

The information on this side of the handout comes from the National Institutes of Health. Visit www.nhlbi.nih.gov to learn more about COPD.



ITHACA HEALTH ALLIANCE



ITHACA FREE CLINIC

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how we can help

CHRONIC CARE PROGRAM



Chronic Care Program

Joining the Chronic Care Program gives you access to all of the services offered at the Ithaca Free Clinic. Patients are seen by appointment, instead of waiting at the walk-in clinic. Services include:

- acupuncture
- chiropractic
- massage therapy
- occupational therapy
- counseling
- herbal medicine
- dietitian
- energy work
- reiki
- health insurance enrollment

Here are some examples of how these services can help patients with COPD.

Acupuncture

Acupuncture is a form of alternative medicine where thin needles are inserted into the body. Although it is often known for treating pain, acupuncture can treat or alleviate various conditions.

Acupuncture can be used to increase chest excursions, which makes breathing easier. Acupuncture can also decrease the severity of COPD symptoms and improve quality of life.

Occupational Therapy

Occupational therapists help patients develop daily living and work skills. For example, they can help patients follow a more active lifestyle and participate in more meaningful daily activities.

Occupational therapists can help people with COPD conserve energy through time management, giving adaptive equipment, and teaching individuals how to control anxiety.

Nutrition

Dieticians can help patients by providing dietary counseling and helping patients to make better dietary choices. Dieticians can help individuals form eating habits that facilitate the achievement of their health goals and maximize health outcomes.

Herbal Medicine

Herbal medicine uses plants for their therapeutic properties. Herbal medicines can be taken in various forms, including as teas or tinctures. For COPD, herbal medicines can help decrease airway resistance and support function.

Herbalists assess symptoms; take a history including medications, lab tests and other relevant information; evaluate overall health to look for other conditions that may need assessment or treatment; other symptoms are discussed that may or may not be related to COPD or lung function; a health team is set up if not already in place including a pulmonologist and holistic practitioners; lifestyle changes and the nature of the chronic disorder are discussed; herbal medicines are discussed and prepared; these may include medicines that:

1. Decrease airway resistance and help breathing
2. Support lung function
3. For any other health care problems and for overall health

- The Ithaca Free Clinic offers the Chronic Care Program, an integrative project that:
- helps patients with chronic diseases and conditions live with potential long-term health consequences
 - makes each patient a part of a “care team” with multiple providers and health care professionals to help set and maintain the patient’s health care plan
 - helps patients set goals and also provides support to reach those goals
 - works with each patient to become and stay healthy!

To join the Chronic Care Program,
call (607) 330-1254
or email ChronicCare@IthacaHealth.org.

Learn more about the Ithaca Free Clinic at:
IthacaHealth.org

We are located at 521 West Seneca Street,
Ithaca, New York.



The Ithaca Free Clinic offers occupational therapy services for various conditions, including COPD. Occupational therapy can help people conserve energy with their daily activities.

¹“Acupuncture for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD): A multicenter, randomized, sham-controlled trial” in Journal of Medicine, published in 2016.