Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) refers to emphysema and chronic bronchitis, which are lung-related diseases that block airways and cause breathing-related problems. It is the leading cause of death and illness worldwide and is often preventable.

The most common cause for COPD is tobacco smoke. However, simple exposure to air pollutants in the home and workplace, genetic factors and respiratory infections are all contributors to the development of COPD.

Many COPD symptoms are similar to asthma, like shortness of breath and coughing. If you experience a morning cough that produces a yellowish phlegm, this is characteristic of COPD. Other symptoms include frequent respiratory infections and fatigue.

People with COPD are at a greater risk for lung infection. If you have COPD, talk to your doctor about getting a flu and pneumonia shot each year to help avoid infection.

Although there is no cure for COPD there are medications that can help with the symptoms:

- Bronchodilators help to relax the muscles around the airways
- Inhaled corticosteroids can help people who suffer from moderate to severe COPD
- Antibiotics can be prescribed during COPD flare-ups

If you have COPD avoid things that can irritate your lungs, like smoking tobacco or smoke-filled environments, pollution and air that is cold and dry.

Source: American Academy of Allergy Asthma & Immunology; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
**Am I at risk for COPD?**

You are at risk for developing COPD if you have any of the following:

- You have a history of smoking
- You have had long-term exposure to air pollutants (including second-hand smoke)
- You experience a chronic cough (with or without phlegm)
- You experience wheezing
- You have shortness of breath that worsens over time
- You cannot keep up physically with people your own age

If you are affected by the above symptoms and believe you are at risk for COPD, ask your doctor about testing. A spirometry test measures how well your lungs are working.

**Spirometry** is a simple, non-invasive test, in which you blow air into a mouthpiece connected to a machine.

The machine will calculate the amount of air you blow out in one second and then again in 6 seconds or more.

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**COPD affects over 24 million Americans**

**24.9%** of those with COPD are non-smokers

**Kentucky is the state with the highest COPD presence:**

**9.3%** of the population

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**The Take-Away:** If you think you have COPD, visit your doctor to discuss treatment options

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Sources: COPD Foundation
HEALTH TEST

How Much Do You Know About COPD?

Go to the bottom of the newsletter to check your answers.

1. Chronic bronchitis, emphysema and asthma are all lung diseases that make up COPD.
   - False

2. There is a breathing test doctors can do to determine if you have COPD.
   - True

3. COPD is the leading cause of death and illness worldwide.
   - True

4. You can use breathing techniques to cure COPD.
   - False

HEALTHY BITES

Strawberry Mint Spritzer: Soothing Summer Drink

INGREDIENTS
6 fresh mint leaves
1 pound strawberries (about 2 cups)
1/2 cup sugar
Grated zest of 1 medium lime (about 1 teaspoon)
2 tablespoons lime juice (1 to 2 medium limes)
4 cups club soda, sparkling water or seltzer
6 lime wedges (optional)
6 mint sprigs (optional)

DIRECTIONS
Chop mint leaves into very small pieces.
Stem and halve strawberries. Put in a food processor or blender and process until smooth.
Add sugar, lime zest, lime juice and chopped mint leaves, process until blended.
To serve, pour 1/3 cup strawberry mixture and 2/3 cup club soda into each glass; add ice and stir. Garnish with a lime wedge and mint sprig.

NUTRITION
Serves: 6
Per serving: 1 cup
Calories: 90
Fat: 0g
Carbohydrate: 23g
Sodium: 34mg
Cholesterol: 0mg
Protein: 1g

Recipe: American Heart Association

Answers to the Health Test!

1. False. Asthma is a respiratory condition which causes difficulty in breathing, but it is not one of the lung diseases that make up COPD. Chronic bronchitis and emphysema are the lung diseases that make up COPD.

2. True. Spirometry is a test in which the patient blows into a spirometer and the amount of air they blow during various seconds will be calculated.

3. True. COPD is the leading cause of death and illness worldwide and it is often preventable. Tobacco use is a key factor in COPD being a prominent illness.

4. False. Although you can use two breathing techniques (pursed-lips breathing and diaphragmatic breathing) to help control shortness of breath, brought on by COPD, they will not cure COPD permanently.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention