November/December 2020

What is COPD?

COPD, or Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, is a group of conditions that cause breathing problems as a result of airway blockages. The diagnoses of emphysema and chronic bronchitis are examples of COPD. Almost 16 million people in the US have been diagnosed with COPD and many others may have COPD but have not been officially diagnosed. Although COPD cannot be cured, it can be treated with the help of your healthcare provider.

What causes COPD?

Inhalation of tobacco smoke is the most common cause of COPD in the United States and is a major factor in the progression of the disease. Other factors that may contribute to the development of COPD are exposure to air pollution, certain respiratory infections, or genetic factors.

Protect Against the Flu

The flu virus remains one of the Top 10 leading causes of death each year in the US, and this is especially concerning during the current COVID-19 pandemic. Now more than ever, it is important that you protect yourself, your loved ones, and your community against the flu by following these recommended safety precautions:

- Get the flu vaccine
- Avoid close contact with those who are sick and stay home if you are
- Wear a mask when in public
- Use your elbow to cover cough and sneezes
- Wash hands thoroughly for 20-seconds and carry hand sanitizer with you to use frequently
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth
- Disinfect surfaces
- Ensure you are maintaining a physical distance of 6ft in public spaces

What you need to know:

The symptoms of COVID-19 and the flu are very similar. For this reason, it is important to get the flu vaccination. Up to 20% of people who have COVID also have the flu and other respiratory illnesses. By vaccinating against the flu, you are protecting yourself from getting both the flu and COVID-19 virus at the same time. If you do get the flu, the vaccination should lessen the severity of your symptoms.

Symptoms to watch out for:

- Chills
- Cough/Congestion (allergy-like symptoms)
- Fatigue
- Fever
- Headache

- Muscle and Body Aches
- Nausea
- Shortness of Breath
- Sore Throat

The CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against flu. While the flu shot is really important for high-risk populations such as infants, the elderly, and those with underlying or chronic health conditions, everyone can benefit from an annual flu vaccination.

Be sure to talk with your physician or clinical provider to understand how the flu shot can protect you and others this flu season.

Take care of your mental health

Mental health is an important part of overall health and wellbeing. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It may also affect how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices during an emergency.

People with pre-existing mental health conditions or substance use disorders may be particularly vulnerable in an emergency. Mental health conditions *(such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, or schizophrenia)* affect a person's thinking, feeling, mood or behavior in a way that influences their ability to relate to others and function each day. These conditions may be situational *(short-term)* or long-lasting *(chronic).* People with preexisting mental health conditions should continue with their treatment and be aware of new or worsening symptoms.

If you think you have new or worse symptoms, call your healthcare provider.

Call your healthcare provider if stress gets in the way of your daily activities for several days in a row. Free and confidential resources can also help you or a loved one connect with a skilled, trained counselor in your area.

WE CAN DO THIS.

Get immediate help in a crisis

- **Call 911**
- **Disaster Distress Helpline:** 1-800-985-5990 *(press 2 for Spanish)*, or text TalkWithUs for English or Hablanos for Spanish to 66746. Spanish speakers from Puerto Rico can text Hablanos to 1-787-339-2663.
- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** 1-800-273-TALK (8255) for English, 1-888-628-9454 for Spanish, or Lifeline Crisis Chat.
- **National Domestic Violence Hotline:** 1-800-799-7233 or text LOVEIS to 22522.

- **National Child Abuse Hotline:** 1-800-4AChild (1-800-422-4453) or text 1-800-422-4453
- **National Sexual Assault Hotline:** 1-800-656-HOPE (4673) or Online Chat.
- **The Eldercare Locator:** 1-800-677-1116 TTY Instructions.
- **Veteran's Crisis Line:** 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or Crisis Chat or text: 8388255.

Mental Health and Coping During COVID-19. (n.d.). Retrieved October 16, 2020, from https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html

What is COPD? cont.

What are the symptoms of COPD?
- Shortness of breath
- Difficulty taking a deep breath
- Frequent coughing or wheezing
- Excess mucus, sputum or phlegm production

How is COPD diagnosed?
COPD can be diagnosed with a simple breathing test called spirometry which measures the function of your lungs.

How is COPD treated?
- Quit smoking
- Avoid tobacco smoke or other air pollution
- Take medication such as inhalers or nebulizers
- Supplemental oxygen
- Pulmonary rehabilitation
- Avoid lung infections and discuss influenza and pneumonia vaccinations with your healthcare provider

A diagnosis of COPD can impose limitations on your quality of life. People who have COPD suffer from restrictions on their physical activity, may be more susceptible to lung infections, may need to carry oxygen with them everywhere they go, and are at risk for more hospital visits or stays. If you have concerns about COPD, discuss them with your healthcare provider. Again, although COPD cannot be cured, it can be treated to preserve as much quality of life as possible.

Written by: Meghan Tolentino MSN, AGNP-C

Basics About COPD. (July, 19 2019). Retrieved September 24, 2020, from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: https://www.cdc.gov/copd/basics-about.html

Dignity Health®
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

November/December 2020

Bazzeni Wellness Center
Office is currently Closed
1027 Linden Avenue, Long Beach
Office Line: 562-491-9811
"NEW WAY TO CONTACT US":
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If you would like to receive this newsletter directly at home, please contact the **Bazzeni Wellness Center at 562.491.9811.**

Si le gustaria recibir este foyeto en español porfavor llame al 562.491.9187.

Did you know?

You can stay in touch and up-to-date by following us on social media.

📷 **@DignityHealthSoCal**

🐦 **@DignityHealthSC**

in **@DignityHealthSouthernCalifornia**

f **@StMaryMedicalCenter**

When you see a QR code in the magazine, scan it with your personal smart device to watch the associated video.

Childbirth Classes
Virtual Classes: Tuesdays (4 weeks)
6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
In-person Classes: Saturdays (4 weeks)
10:00 am to 12:00 pm

For more information, please contact, 888-478-6279.