



MDwise

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COPD: Avoiding Your Triggers

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Overview

You can help reduce flare-ups of your COPD by learning what the triggers are and avoiding them. Pay attention to symptoms that may warn you of a flare-up. While some triggers may be out of your control, there are others that may be easier to avoid.

How can you avoid triggers?

Here are some ways to avoid COPD triggers.

- Take steps to prevent colds and other infections.
When people with COPD get the flu, it may turn into something more serious, like pneumonia.
 - Get a flu shot each year, as soon as it's available.
 - Ask those you live or work with to do the same, so they don't get the flu and infect you.
 - Ask your doctor about the pneumococcal and whooping cough (pertussis) vaccines.
 - If you must be around people with colds or flu, wash your hands often.
- Do not smoke or allow others to smoke around you.
Quitting smoking is the most important step you can take to prevent more damage to your lungs. It is never too late to stop smoking. Stop-smoking programs and medicines boost your chances of quitting for good.
- Avoid outdoor lung irritants such as air pollution.
 - Try to stay inside with your windows closed when air pollution is bad.
 - Use air-conditioning in hot weather so you don't have to open windows.
- Try to keep indoor air clean.
 - Use an air conditioner or air purifier with a special air (HEPA) filter.
 - Avoid strong chemicals and aerosol sprays.
 - Consider using natural cleaners, such as vinegar, lemon juice, boric acid, or baking soda.
 - Make sure fireplaces and wood stoves have tight-fitting doors. Check flues and chimneys for cracks that could allow fumes into your house.

- Make sure wood stoves and gas ranges are vented well. And turn on your kitchen fan when you cook.

Credits

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