



Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) has four stages- mild, moderate, severe and very severe. You can use this information to guide a conversation with your healthcare provider about your COPD stage and treatment goals.



Recognizing the Signs of COPD Progression

COPD is a progressive lung disease, meaning it is likely to worsen over time.

Circle the letter that best describes you:

- A. I have little to no symptoms but if I walk on an incline or exercise, I may get out of breath.
- B. I have symptoms regularly and feel out of breath if I walk on a flat surface or a longer distance.
- C. I have symptoms every day and have a hard time doing activities such as shopping, using stairs or getting dressed.
- D. My symptoms are keeping me from doing everyday activities like cooking or bathing. I also have less energy.



If you circled B, C or D, your COPD stage may be moderate or severe. Your healthcare provider can help determine your stage.

Understanding Moderate to Severe COPD

As your COPD gets worse, there is more inflammation or swelling in your airways. This causes your lung function to get worse, and it makes it harder to breathe. Changes in your symptoms and how you feel are important to discuss with your healthcare provider.

At your next medical appointment, use the checklist to guide the discussion:

- I have more symptoms than the last time I saw you.
- My medications are not working as well as the last time I saw you.
- I am using my quick relief or rescue medication more often than the last time I saw you.
- I am concerned I will need to go to the hospital because I can't breathe.
- My oxygen levels dropped lower than the last time I saw you.
- I have other new or worsening health conditions you should know about.
- _____



After talking to your healthcare provider, medical tests may be ordered to check how well your lungs are working and measure your oxygen level. A blood test may be ordered if your provider suspects your symptoms are caused by an allergic type of COPD.



Based on the results of your medical tests, you and your healthcare provider will find the best treatment plan to help you manage symptoms and do more of the things you enjoy.

Learn more at [Lung.org/COPD-stage](https://www.lung.org/COPD-stage).