



What you need to know about...

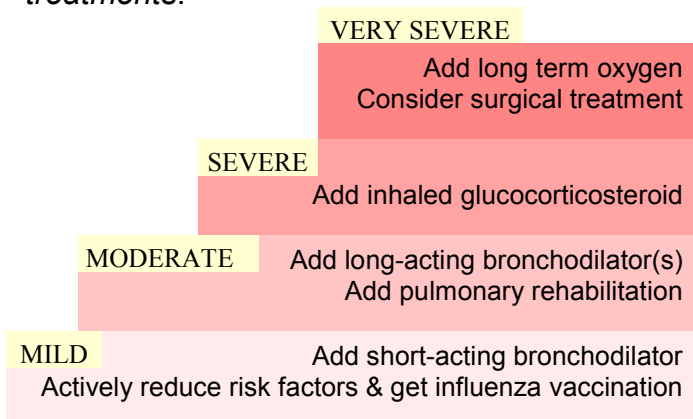
COPD Management

How is COPD managed?

According to the **Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (GOLD)**, a “stepwise” treatment plan should be individualized and based on the *severity* of the disease. Disease severity is determined by:

- Symptoms
- Airflow limitation (established by a PFT)
- Frequency and severity of *exacerbations* (worsening of COPD symptoms)
- Complications and comorbidities
- General health status

If your physician says your COPD is **mild**, you should expect to be prescribed a *short-acting bronchodilator* to be used on an as needed basis. **Moderate** COPD calls for the addition of regular treatment with one or more *long-acting bronchodilators* and *pulmonary rehabilitation*. When your COPD becomes **severe**, a *glucocorticosteroid* should be introduced to the plan. If your COPD is **very severe**, your physician may prescribe *long-term oxygen* use and consider *surgical treatments*.



What other things can I do to manage my COPD?

- Stop smoking and avoid lung irritants
- Protect yourself from colds and the flu
- Learn to use your medications and respiratory equipment correctly
- Participate regularly in aerobic & strength-training activities



- Learn and practice better breathing and relaxation techniques
- Learn and practice airway clearance techniques
- Conserve your energy & manage fatigue
- Find ways to cope with stress and emotions such as depression and anxiety
- Modify your diet to maintain a healthy weight
- Regularly communicate symptoms, medication side effects, and other concerns to your health care provider
- Develop an **action plan** with your health care provider for managing exacerbations and lung infections

Is there a cure for COPD?

No, but preliminary studies show that if you take your medications as directed, you can help slow the progression of COPD. By undergoing all of the best treatments that your health care providers offer, and by being proactive in your day-to-day management, you will live better with COPD.