Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease Is Manageable

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The process of breathing is simple: inhale and exhale. Your body takes in the good air and discards the bad. But for 16 million Americans with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), breathing is not that easy, Healthy Black Men reported.

COPD is a progressive disease that gradually worsens over time. For those suffering from COPD, ordinary tasks such as walking up a flight of stairs or making your bed can become extremely difficult and cause bouts of wheezing, coughing and shortness of breath. What's more, as COPD begins to severely limit daily activity, those with COPD are left feeling tired, weak and depressed. If not treated early, COPD can cause serious lung damage.

But the good news is pulmonary rehabilitation can combat and slow the progression of the disease. As a part of COPD therapy, doctors urge patients who smoke to give up the habit. In addition, doctors may prescribe short-acting or long-acting bronchodilators. These meds relax the bronchial muscles and make the airways larger so air can more easily pass through the lungs. Special programs also use a combination of stretching, resistance and endurance training to lift the spirits of COPD patients.

Most often COPD is diagnosed in middle-aged or older adults; it isn't infectious. Although there is no cure yet, treatments and lifestyle changes can improve COPD patients' outlook and slow the progression of the disease.

In addition to COPD, middle-aged and older adults are also at risk of Alzheimer's and other dementia. As with COPD, physical activity can reduce chances of developing these illnesses. Click here for more information.

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