COPD: What is it?

Information to improve your health from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, or COPD, is a chronic, progressive disease that makes it difficult for you to breathe. Typical symptoms include coughing, increased mucus production, a tight feeling in your chest, shortness of breath, wheezing, and other symptoms related to your lungs and airway.

COPD can be caused by long-term exposure to air pollution, dust, allergens, noxious fumes and cigarette smoking.

Most people diagnosed with COPD are 40 or older, but the disease occurs with individuals of all ages due to a number of factors, such as genetics.

Don't Stress Out!

A stressful life can be an unhealthy life. Did you know chronic stress can aggravate many chronic conditions? Protect your health and try the tips below to relieve stress:

- **Keep things in perspective** – Life is full of minor annoyances, just remember most of them are minor and quickly pass with time.
- **Exercise** – Physical activity has been shown to help regulate stress hormones.
- **Enjoy a hobby** – Read a book, plant a garden or play some guitar on your back porch. Take some time for you, and do whatever it is that relaxes you.
- **Organize** – A neat living or working space can greatly reduce everyday stress.
- **Talk** – Pick up the phone and call a friend or family member. It never hurts to vent off a little steam with a trusted loved one.

If you feel you are suffering with chronic stress, reach out to your physician and let them know. Your employer may even offer an employee assistance program which provides additional coverage for many personal issues, including stress.

If you have any questions about stress management, or would like to find a provider in your area, please call customer service at the phone number on the back of your member ID card.

Recommended Screenings

Spirometry, which means "the measuring of breath," is an important tool to diagnose, monitor and manage COPD. This simple test is typically done in a doctor's office or outpatient setting. You are usually asked to take in as deep a breath as possible and then breathe out into a sensor as long and as hard as you can. Sometimes, you will be asked to inhale rapidly to check for any upper airway obstructions. Talk to your doctor to schedule this test, if necessary.

Your Questions Answered

Do you have questions about a chronic condition such as asthma, COPD, diabetes or heart disease?

If so, call Disease Management and talk to a registered nurse. You'll get personal attention, helpful advice and best of all, your questions answered.

1-888-841-5741

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. CDT

membermanagement@bcbsal.org

AlabamaBlue.com

This information is provided for general informational purposes. Information contained in this communication is not intended to replace professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified healthcare provider regarding your healthcare needs. Never disregard professional medical advice or delay seeking medical advice because of something you have read in this informational piece. Always check your benefits for coverage information and limitations.

Eat for Your Health

Just because you decide to eat healthy doesn't mean you have to cut back on taste. Here's a recipe for a savory treat from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute:

Baked Salmon Dijon

Yield 6 servings
Serving Size 4 oz salmon

Ingredients:

1 C fat-free sour cream

2 tsp dried dill

3 Tbsp scallions (green onions), rinsed and finely chopped

2 Tbsp Dijon mustard

2 Tbsp lemon juice

1½ lb salmon fillet, cut into 6 portions (4 oz each)

½ tsp garlic powder

½ tsp ground black pepper

Cooking spray

Each serving provides:

calories	196
total fat	7 g
saturated fat	2 g
cholesterol	76 mg
sodium	229 mg
total fiber	0 g
protein	27 g
carbohydrates	5g
Potassium	703 mg

1. Preheat oven to 400 °F.
2. Whisk sour cream, dill, scallions, mustard, and lemon juice in a small bowl to blend.
3. Lightly coat baking sheet with cooking spray.
4. Place salmon, skin side down, on the prepared baking sheet. Sprinkle with garlic powder and pepper, then spread with sauce.
5. Bake salmon fillets until each is opaque in the center and flakes easily with a fork in the thickest part, about 20 minutes (to a minimum internal temperature of 145 °F).
6. Serve immediately.