

Quick facts about COPD:

- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is a long-lasting respiratory disorder that causes the airways of the lungs to be inflamed and become “obstructed”. The two major forms of the disease include chronic bronchitis and emphysema¹.
- Those suffering from COPD usually experience shortness of breath, long-lasting coughs, and sputum production. COPD gradually deprive individuals of their health and vitality, and affects their quality of life. Up to 79 per cent of Canadians with COPD avoid everyday activities².
- Hospital admissions for COPD lung attacks in Canada averaged a 10-day length of stay at a cost of \$10,000 per stay. The total cost of COPD hospitalizations is estimated to be at \$1.5 billion a year³.
- COPD affects approximately 3 million Canadians, including 1.5 million Canadians who say they currently suffer from this disease and another 1.5 million undiagnosed Canadians⁴. This makes COPD Canada’s fourth leading cause of death.
- The disease is especially prevalent among younger Canadian baby boomers - one in seven Canadians aged 45 to 49 (375,000) may have COPD⁵.
- According to the latest estimates by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2007, 210 million people currently have COPD. The disease is predicted to become the third leading cause of death worldwide by 2030⁶.
- COPD poses a huge drain on health resources and carries a significant economic in Canada. It accounts for the highest rate of hospital admission and readmission among major chronic illnesses in the country. 18% of COPD patients were readmitted once within the year and 14% twice within the year⁷.

¹ Canadian Lung Association (2005). Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD): A national report card. Retrieved from http://www.lung.ca/resources/2005.copd_reportcard.pdf

² Canadian Lung Association (2011). Out of breath: Many Canadians avoid everyday activities because of COPD [Press Release]. Retrieved from http://www.lung.ca/media-medias/news-nouvelles_e.php?id=213

³ Canadian Thoracic Society (2010). The human and economic burden of COPD: A leading cause of hospital admission in Canada. Retrieved from http://www.respiratoryguidelines.ca/sites/all/files/CTS_COPD_report.pdf

⁴ Canadian Lung Association (2007). New Lung Association research: Millions more may have COPD than previously estimated [Press Release]. Retrieved from http://www.lung.ca/media-medias/news-nouvelles_e.php?id=98

⁵ Canadian Lung Association (2007). New Lung Association research: Millions more may have COPD than previously estimated [Press Release]. Retrieved from http://www.lung.ca/media-medias/news-nouvelles_e.php?id=98

⁶ World Health Organization (2011). Chronic respiratory diseases. Retrieved from <http://www.who.int/respiratory/copd/en/index.html>

⁷ Canadian Thoracic Society (2010). The human and economic burden of COPD: A leading cause of hospital admission in Canada. Retrieved from http://www.respiratoryguidelines.ca/sites/all/files/CTS_COPD_report.pdf