



## WHAT SHOULD WOMEN KNOW ABOUT QUITTING SMOKING?

### IT'S HARD TO QUIT EVEN WITH A COPD DIAGNOSIS:

Quitting smoking is the best way to reduce your risk of COPD or slow down the progression of the disease. Despite this, many people do not quit after a COPD diagnosis. Just under 40% of women with a COPD diagnosis report that they currently smoke.

Many people think quitting after a diagnosis may not help but quitting smoking can have immediate benefits. In just minutes after quitting smoking, heart rate and blood nicotine levels drop. After a few days, your carbon monoxide levels normalize. After a few years, coughing and shortness of breath decrease, and the risk of heart attack and coronary disease drops significantly.

**LEARN HOW TO MANAGE YOUR COPD  
AT [RESPHEALTH.ORG/WECARE](https://resphealth.org/wecare)**

## READY TO QUIT SMOKING?

It is never too late to start your smoke free life! Utilize these resources to start your quit journey.



### COURAGE TO QUIT®

Respiratory Health Association offers Courage to Quit®, an evidence-based smoking cessation program. It is available in both a one-on-one or group setting and offers information, support, and opportunities to practice skills to help you reach your smoke-free goal. Learn more about Courage to Quit® at [RespHealth.org/QuitSmoking](https://RespHealth.org/QuitSmoking)



### ONLINE SUPPORT

[Women.Smokefree.Gov](https://www.women.smokefree.gov) offers online support and information for women looking to live a smoke-free life. This website includes information on tools and tips, pregnancy and motherhood, and how to find positive support.



### TELEPHONE SUPPORT

The CDC Quitline offers cessation counseling over the phone! This easy-to-use tool can help you build a quit smoking plan. You can contact the CDC Quitline at **1-800-QUIT-NOW**.



*This resource was created with support from the Learn More Breathe Better® program of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.*



## WOMEN EMPOWERED THROUGH COPD AWARENESS AND RESPIRATORY HEALTH EDUCATION

### SMOKING AMONG WOMEN:

While men are more likely than women to smoke, women are still greatly impacted by the effects of cigarettes and tobacco use. About 11% of adult women currently smoke cigarettes in the U.S., compared to 14% among men. As with men, the more women smoke, their risk for developing lung cancer, COPD, and other conditions that lower life expectancy increases. According to the CDC, only 38% of female smokers will live to the age of 80 as compared to the 70% of nonsmoking females. Women in minority groups are more likely to become smokers and develop these adverse effects.

In all, smoking-related complications have contributed to more than 200,000 deaths in U.S. women every year.

### COPD IN WOMEN:

As of 2020, women have a higher prevalence of COPD (5.9%) than men (5.2%). Despite this, 38% of women with COPD continue to smoke cigarettes. Due to bias and/or a lack of research or awareness, women are often under or misdiagnosed when they are showing signs of COPD. Younger women are more likely to experience severe breathlessness, severe airflow limitations, and flareups.

Even with the more severe symptoms, women are either not offered a spirometry test when showing signs or are misdiagnosed with asthma.

The WE CARE campaign goal is to raise awareness about chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) among women who may be or are diagnosed with COPD. Despite the growing number of women living with COPD, many people still associate it as something that only affects older men.

Many women with COPD, or who are at risk for COPD, delay going to the doctor when symptoms appear or worsen. This could be due to several reasons- they brush it off as something minor, they don't have time to go to an appointment, or they're embarrassed about their symptoms.

We want women to know that WE CARE and want them to be the healthiest version of themselves.

[RESPHEALTH.ORG/WECARE](https://resphealth.org/wecare)  
888-880-5864 | [info@resphealth.org](mailto:info@resphealth.org)

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