

# I Have COPD.\* What if I Get Sick?

## How Do I Know if I Am Getting an Infection?

When you have COPD, your lungs do not work as well as they should. You can't fight infection as well. You are more likely to get an infection in your lungs, nose, throat, and other airways.

These infections can make your COPD symptoms worse. They can harm your overall health. This is especially true in older adults. They can cause you to have

- More shortness of breath
- Chest tightness
- More coughing and/or mucus than usual
- Yellow, green, or brown mucus, or mucus that is thicker or stickier than usual
- Fever

## What Should I Do if I Think I Have an Infection?

Call your healthcare practitioner (prak-tih-shun-er) if you have these symptoms. You may need to have your medicine changed. You may need to get a medicine called an antibiotic (an-tie-by-ah-tik).

### Did you know?

**Your healthcare practitioner can help you fight infections like pneumonia. It's important to call him or her if you notice that you have symptoms of a lung infection.**

\*Chronic (kron-ick) obstructive (ob-struck-tiv) pulmonary (pull-muh-nair-ee) disease, including chronic bronchitis (brank-eye-tis), emphysema (em-fuh-zee-muh), or both.

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