



**Chronic Obstructive  
Pulmonary Disease  
Spring/Summer 2017**

## High blood pressure — in your lungs?

People with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) have an increased risk for a condition called pulmonary hypertension (PH). PH is similar to regular high blood pressure, except it affects your lungs.

PH occurs when the blood vessels in your lungs become narrow, thick and stiff. Blood doesn't

flow easily through these damaged blood vessels. As a result, your heart has to work harder to keep blood moving. That may lead to a condition called heart failure. That means your heart is weaker and can't pump blood the way it should.

Symptoms of PH include:

- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue

- Chest pain
- Fast heartbeat
- Dizziness or fainting
- Bluish color of the lips or skin

Talk to your doctor if you notice any of these symptoms. If tests determine that you do have PH, your doctor can prescribe medicines and other therapies that will help you feel better.

Work closely with your doctor to manage your COPD. Visit the American Lung Association at **[www.lung.org](http://www.lung.org)** for more information.

Sources: *American Lung Association ([www.lung.org](http://www.lung.org)); National Institutes of Health ([www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov))*

---

Contract services are funded in part under contract with the State of Arizona. This is general health information and should not replace the advice or care you get from your provider. Always ask your provider about your own health care needs.

If you would no longer like to receive this mailing, please call Member Services and ask for the Care Management Department.

Mercy Care Plan is administered by Aetna Medicaid Administrators, LLC, an Aetna company.

### Contact us

Mercy Care Plan, 4350 E. Cotton Center Blvd., Building D, Phoenix, AZ 85040

Member Services: **602-263-3000** or **1-800-624-3879** (TTY/TDD **711**)

Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

**[www.MercyCarePlan.com](http://www.MercyCarePlan.com)**

## Helping others help you

Chances are you don't think twice about lending a helping hand. Asking for help? That's not so easy.

Asking family and friends for help if you have a serious health problem — like heart disease or cancer — benefits both you and them. Very likely, friends and family who care about you want to help out. They may not know how.

To help you, your friends and family can:

- Take you to and from medical appointments
- Remind you to take your medicine if you sometimes forget
- Help you think of questions for your doctor

- Stay with you at doctor's visits to help keep track of what's said
- Lend a hand with chores when you don't have much energy

Emotional support is important too. If you need someone to talk to, be sure to reach out. Sometimes a shoulder to lean on is the best medicine of all.

One last idea: When eating well or getting more exercise is important for your health, invite others to join you. Perhaps a friend could join you for daily walks. Or your whole family could help fix — and enjoy — healthy meals. It's a win for everyone.

*Source: National Institutes of Health (www.nih.gov)*

**Need help?** A care manager can tell you more about chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and help you connect with your provider. Call Member Services and ask for the Care Management Department.



---

## Don't let COPD get you down

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) can take a toll. This disease, which affects your lungs, makes it hard to breathe. It can also make you sad, anxious and afraid.

These feelings are common in people with COPD. And it's important not to ignore them. If you do, they can make your other symptoms worse.

It's good to talk to others about how you're feeling. It's important to tell your doctor too. He or she can evaluate and may have suggestions to help you.

Some people also find it helpful to:

- Join a support group
- Try deep breathing or listening to relaxing music
- Focus on thoughts that help you relax

Different things may work better for different people. So it may take some time to find the strategy that's best for you. If one thing doesn't work, try something else. It will be good for your overall health.

*Source: National Institutes of Health (www.nih.gov)*