

# Clear and Easy #6



**Molina Healthcare**  
**24 Hour Nurse Advice Line**  
(888) 275-8750  
TTY: (866) 735-2929

**Molina Healthcare**  
**Línea de TeleSalud**  
**Disponible las 24 Horas**  
(866) 648-3537  
TTY: (866) 833-4703

# **Titles by Clear and Easy**

Book 1 – Pregnancy

Book 2 – Diabetes

Book 3 – Stress and Depression

Book 4 – End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD)

Book 5 – Asthma

Book 6 – Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary  
Disease (COPD)

Book 7 – Congestive Heart Failure

Book 8 – Hypertension

Book 9 – Coronary Heart Disease

Book 10 – How to Take Care of Your Sick  
Family

Book 11 – Help to Quit Smoking

Book 12 – Kids and Asthma

Book 13 – Kids and Diabetes

Book 14 – How to Keep Your Family Healthy

Book 15 – Asthma and COPD

Book 16 – Hypertension and Coronary Heart  
Disease

Book 17 – Postpartum: Caring for You and  
Your Newborn

Do you have health questions? Call Molina Healthcare's Nurse Advice Line. Places to put our number:

- On all your home phones.
- Your cell phone. Add us to your list of contacts.
- Your purse or wallet.
- Refrigerator door.
- Bedroom nightstand.
- In your medicine cabinet.
- In easy to reach places.



**NM Members:**

Molina Healthcare services are funded in part under contract with the State of New Mexico.

# Clear and Easy

## Book 6 - Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

### Important Phone Numbers

Provider: \_\_\_\_\_

Provider: \_\_\_\_\_

Family: \_\_\_\_\_

Neighbor: \_\_\_\_\_

Molina Healthcare offers programs to help members stay healthy. These health and wellness programs are at no cost to you. They are part of your benefits. Programs include:

- Asthma
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Diabetes
- Heart Health
- Pregnancy Support
- Stop Smoking

Molina Healthcare uses different ways to identify members for these programs. These include information from claims, pharmacy or other health programs. You are eligible for one or more of these programs. The choice is yours.

Our providers, nurses and other staff are here to help you learn about your health. You can talk with them by phone to get answers to your questions. You can also get more information such as a newsletter or booklet. Our staff can help you stay in touch with your health care provider. They can help you understand your treatment. They can also help you if you have any problems.

You are part of one of these programs. Call us if you would like more services. Your health care provider can call us too. The number to call is **(866) 891-2320**. You can choose to be removed at any time. We look forward to helping you stay in good health.

***If you need this booklet in another language, large print, Braille or audio format, please call the Member Services number on the back of your ID card.***



# Table of Contents

## Clear and Easy

### Book 5 - Chronic Obstructive

### Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

Introduction.....	6
What Is COPD?.....	8
Symptoms.....	9
Causes .....	11
When to See Your Provider.....	11
What You Can Do to Feel Better.....	12
Exercise.....	13
Medicines.....	14
Vaccines.....	14
Support.....	15
Resources.....	19

## **Introduction**

You and your provider can work together to help you be as healthy as you can be. This booklet gives you some quick tips on what you can do to manage COPD. You should not use this booklet in place of what your health care provider tells you. If you have problems with your health, be sure to see your provider (or Primary Care Provider) for treatment.

For questions about medicine or health concerns, you can call your provider.

If your health plan has a nurse advice line, you can call them too. If you don't feel well, they can help you decide what to do.

You may have someone who helps you with your health care. You must give permission to your provider or case managers to talk to this person about your care.



*This booklet is to help you. It does not take the place of your provider's care. If you or your family has an emergency, you should call your provider. Or, go to the nearest emergency room.*

## **What Is COPD?**

COPD is a disease that makes it hard to breathe. COPD is short for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. It doesn't really go away, and may get worse over time.

COPD includes two main conditions—emphysema and chronic bronchitis. In emphysema, the lung tissue is damaged or destroyed.

In chronic bronchitis, the lining of the airways is always irritated and inflamed. This makes lots of mucus form, which makes it hard to breathe. Most people who have COPD have both emphysema and chronic obstructive bronchitis.

## Symptoms

Some of the symptoms of COPD are similar to the symptoms of other diseases and conditions. Your provider can tell you if you have COPD. People with COPD may:

- Cough a lot and have large amounts of mucus.
- Have wheezing.
- Be short of breath.
- Have chest tightness.
- May get colds or flu more often.

If you keep smoking, the damage will occur. In severe COPD, you may have other symptoms, such as:

- Shortness of breath getting worse.

- Swelling of feet and ankles.
- Weight loss.
- Low endurance.

Some severe symptoms may require treatment in a hospital. Be sure to call your provider if:

- You're having a hard time breathing or talking.
- Your lips or fingernails turn bluish or gray. (This is a sign of low oxygen in your blood.)
- You're not mentally alert.
- Your heartbeat is very fast.
- Your usual treatment for symptoms that are getting worse isn't working.

## Causes

Cigarette smoking is the leading cause of COPD. Most people who have COPD smoke or used to smoke. Being around chemicals, other smokers or dust can also cause COPD.

## When to See Your Provider

It's a good idea to have someone go with you to see your provider. It's easier to learn and ask questions when there are two people there. It helps to be ready to answer these questions:



- What symptoms are you having? When did they start?
- What makes your symptoms worse? Better?
- What treatment have you had for COPD? Did it help?
- What medications do you take?
- Are you being treated for any other medical problems?

Be sure to bring all your medicines with you.

## **What You Can Do to Feel Better**

There isn't a cure for COPD. COPD can be worse if you are exposed to things that irritate the lungs. The most important thing you can do is quit smoking. Your provider can help you quit smoking. Try to stay away from other people who are smoking. Avoid other things that irritate the lungs. These include air pollution, chemical fumes or dust.

## Exercise

Check with your health care provider to make sure it's OK to exercise. People with COPD should not avoid exercise.

Exercise can help you be healthy. It helps your lungs and breathing muscles. It will help your immune system. It helps you maintain your weight. And it will improve your mood.



## Medicines

**Be sure to take your medicines just as your provider tells you.** This is important so you keep feeling your best. If you have any questions, call your provider. Tell your provider if you cannot afford your medicines or if you have any side effects.

## Vaccines

**Flu Shots.** The flu (influenza) can cause serious problems for people who have COPD. Flu shots can reduce your risk of the flu. Talk with your provider about getting a flu shot every year.

**Pneumococcal Vaccine.** This vaccine lowers your risk of pneumonia. People who have COPD have more risk of getting it. Talk with your provider about whether you should get this vaccine.

## Support

Many people with COPD have other health issues. These can include:

- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Osteoporosis
- Depression
- Cancer

Coping with these issues can be hard. You may be stressed or become depressed. It's different for every person.

People who help take care of others can also be stressed. It can be hard to keep up

with a treatment plan. Some people don't understand what they need to do. Family members may disagree with a treatment plan. There can be financial problems. Sometimes people feel fear or anxiety, even depression. Alcohol and other substance abuse can occur.

Tell your family and friends how you feel. Let them know how they can help you.

It's OK to ask for help if you are having any of these problems. Your treatment team can help you.



Talk to your provider, or case manager. Joining a support group can help too. This booklet gives names of places where you can get help.

## **How Can Family or Friends Help?**

You may have someone who helps you with your health care. They can:

- Help remind you to take your medicines.
- Help you buy and prepare healthy foods.
- Take a walk with you.
- Go to provider visits with you.

Sometimes it helps when someone else hears what your health care provider says. You must give permission to your providers and case managers to talk to this person about your care.

## Resources

**National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute**  
Health Information Center

(301) 592-8573

<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/lung/copd/index.htm>

**C.O.P.D. Foundation**

(866) 316-2673

<http://www.copdfoundation.org>

**American Academy of Family Physicians:**  
**FamilyDoctor.org Patient Education Site**

(800) 274-2237

<http://familydoctor.org/familydoctor/en/diseases-conditions/chronic-obstructive-pulmonary-disease.html>

## **Smokefree.gov**

Smokefree.gov provides free, accurate information and professional assistance to help support the immediate and long-term needs of people trying to quit smoking.

(800) 784-8669

TTY (800) 332-8615

<http://www.smokefree.gov>







**Printed in the U.S.A.**