

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease RUA Paper

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Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease(COPD) can be classified as a group of common disorders that affect the respiratory system and are characterized by the degeneration of tissues and airway obstruction in the lungs. These disorders affect the daily life of individuals by decreasing the ability to function and work as an independent. COPD causes irreversible damage to the lungs that make breathing gradually more difficult over time. The increasingly obstructed airflow and chronic inflammation cannot entirely be reserved by medication and patients typically develop emphysema, chronic bronchitis and asthma. The disease process causes severe physical limitations and a poor quality of life.

When discussing the epidemiology of COPD, it is the 4th leading cause of mortality and morbidity around the world. 174 million individuals are affected and 6% of the world's population die due to COPD. In the United States alone, 29 million adults are affected, with 1.8 million visits to doctor's offices, 500,000 hospitalizations, and 120,000 deaths annually. Many people are unaware that they have COPD due to the fact that the symptoms are minimal so the number of individuals who have COPD may be greater than reported. Death from COPD is common in individuals that are older than 65 years old. (Raheison & Girodet, 2016).

Etiology and Risk Factors

With COPD, tobacco smoke is one of the primary causes. Progression of the disease worsens with the increase in smoking which also includes second hand exposure. In countries of low income, individuals are exposed to air pollutants in the home like the biomass fuels used for heating, like burning wood, and cooking that can cause the burden of COPD. Individuals are also exposed to dusts and chemical pollutants in the occupational