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Have COPD/emphysema?

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How to Talk to Your Doctor About COPD Treatment

Here's what other patients want you to know
by Pulmonox (Paid Content)

PHOTO CREDIT: SHUTTERSTOCK

Living with COPD or emphysema isn't easy. It can be frustrating, especially if you are unsure of the best way to manage your symptoms. That's why arming yourself with good, accurate information is crucial to getting things under control and living your best life. The first step is to talk to your doctor and work with them to find the best path forward. But where do you begin?

Here are the essential questions to ask your doctor, plus how real patients have found success managing their condition.

1. What is pulmonary rehabilitation, and how can it help me?

Pulmonary rehab is a program that includes health education and supervised training in exercise and breathing techniques. It may also include counseling on good nutrition and smoking cessation. The program is designed to help you improve your strength, stamina and endurance, reduce shortness of breath, and increase your ability to remain active so you can continue to do the things you enjoy.

BARBARA'S STORY

"Pulmonary rehab is a very important component to get my heart to the level I could make it," says Barbara, 69. "I was able to wean myself off of oxygen by exercising to build stamina and strength but, even with that, I still kept the oxygen nearby, and my lung function was still pretty low."

2. Are there other options for treatment available to me?

A variety of medications—including some delivered through an inhaler—are often a first step in treating COPD. Some of these medications work to relax the airways. This makes breathing easier and decreases inflammation that contributes to airway swelling and mucus production. However, as COPD or emphysema progresses, various medications that would help can stop being effective. Your doctor may then prescribe supplemental oxygen. If symptoms continue to worsen, major surgery, such as lung volume reduction or a lung transplant, is considered a last resort.

Patients should know that there's a breakthrough FDA-approved device that fills the treatment gap between medication and surgery. The Zephyr® Endobronchial Valve procedure (aka Zephyr Valve) is a minimally invasive option. It reduces lung hyperinflation to allow patients with severe COPD or emphysema to breathe easier without many of the risks of surgery.*

CHARLIE'S STORY

"When you go into pulmonary rehab therapy, they ask you what your goals are. My goal was to swim again," says Charlie, 68. "To have enough oxygen to not be afraid to get in the pool. Two months after my valves, I went swimming for the first time in five years and it was amazing!"

3. What should I expect from the Zephyr Valve procedure?

This one-time procedure requires no cutting or incisions. Tiny valves are placed inside your airways leading to the hyperinflated area of your lungs. These valves allow air to flow out of this part of the lung but not in, thereby deflating it. In turn, the healthier parts of your lungs can expand and function more efficiently. The result: Patients can breathe easier, do more, and enjoy life.*

KAREN'S STORY

"I asked my doctor about Zephyr Valves. He said the procedure wouldn't work for me," says Karen, 62. "I told him we'd have to agree to disagree. I went to a doctor that offered the valves and now I am doing so much better. It's remarkable!"

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Empower Yourself with Information

If you or someone you care about has COPD or emphysema, you may need to bring treatment options to the doctor's attention. With the right information at hand, you can be your own best advocate—or an advocate for a loved one. Know that the Zephyr Valve is a non-drug, non-surgical, minimally invasive treatment option. It can help patients with severe COPD or emphysema breathe easier, be more active and enjoy a better quality of life.*

Pulmonox, creators of the Zephyr Valve treatment, have a dedicated support team. You can call 855-895-COPD to ask a patient advocate about this option and find a doctor near you.

Do you want to talk to your doctor about this treatment option? Here is how to start that conversation.

Important Safety Information: The Pulmonox Zephyr® Endobronchial Valve (see Important Warnings*) can be indicated for the bronchiectasis treatment of adult patients with hyperinflation associated with severe emphysema in regions of the lung that have little to no collateral ventilation. Complications of treatment may include but are not limited to pneumonia-like fever in the lung(s), worsening of COPD symptoms, hemoptysis, pneumothorax and in rare cases, death. The Zephyr Valve is contraindicated in patients who have not quit smoking or are allergic to fibrin (blood-forming). Please talk to your physician about other contraindications, warnings, precautions, and adverse events. Only a trained physician can decide whether a particular patient is an appropriate candidate for treatment with the Zephyr Valve.

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