

## LEARN ABOUT

# EMPHYSEMA



**This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider.**

### What is Emphysema?

- Emphysema is a lung disease and a type of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease that makes it difficult to breathe
- It occurs when the tiny air sacs in your lungs are damaged and merge into larger air pockets
- These larger pockets trap old air, making it harder for fresh air to enter and for your body to get enough oxygen

### Can it Be Cured?

Emphysema cannot be cured, but symptoms can be managed by:

- Quitting smoking and avoiding secondhand smoke
- Taking prescribed medicines to improve breathing
- Using oxygen therapy if needed
- In some cases, special treatments may help, such as airway valves, surgery to remove damaged lung tissue, or a lung transplant

### Key Facts

Emphysema can be caused by smoking, dirty air, or a rare genetic condition.

Early signs include:

- Trouble breathing
- Coughing up mucus
- Wheezing is a whistling sound when breathing
- A tight feeling in your chest

**A doctor can find out if you have emphysema by:**

- Asking about your health
- Checking your breathing
- Doing tests like chest X-rays, CT scans, or a test called Spirometry, which checks how well you can breathe