

About Spirometry

The best way to find out if you have COPD is to do a lung function test called spirometry.



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www.goldcopd.org



COPD obstructs and slows the flow of air into and out of the lungs.

Spirometry is a simple, **painless** test that is done at a clinic or doctor's office. It measures the amount of air a person can breathe out, and the amount of time taken to do so.

Spirometry measures:

- **Forced Expiratory Volume in One Second (FEV₁)**
How much air you can exhale in one second after inhaling as deeply as you can.
- **Forced Vital Capacity (FVC)**
How much air you can exhale after inhaling as deeply as you can.
- **Ratio of FEV₁ to FVC**
How much air of the total air that you exhale is exhaled in the first second (a measure of how quickly you can empty your lungs).

In patients with COPD, the ratio of FEV₁ to FVC is reduced. As COPD progresses, FEV₁ declines. A health care provider can help interpret and explain each individual patient's spirometry results.



World COPD Day 2011 is organized by the **G**lobal Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (www.goldcopd.org).