

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) in Vermont

August 2025

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is a serious respiratory condition where the lungs are damaged in such a way that they can't go back to normal, leading to long-term breathing problems. The most common types of COPD are **emphysema** and **chronic bronchitis**.

Symptoms of COPD include:

- shortness of breath
- frequent or lingering cough
- wheezing
- fatigue
- reoccurring lung infections

This brief aims to raise awareness about what COPD is and how it is affecting Vermonters, and provide action steps to prevent or mitigate the symptoms of COPD.

Visit [COPD: Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease | Vermont Department of Health](#) to learn more.

If you need help accessing or understanding this information, contact AHS.VDHCOPDProgram@vermont.gov.

Key Points

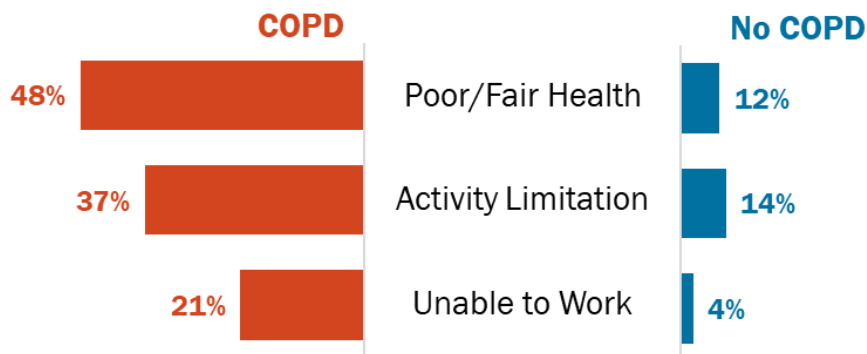
- **COPD affects 34,000 Vermonters every year and can impact their daily lives.**
- **Those with asthma and those who smoke cigarettes are at higher risk for COPD.**
- **There are things you can do to lower your risk of COPD, like getting vaccinated, quitting smoking, managing your asthma, and getting routine checkups.**

COPD can affect quality of life.

34,000 Vermont adults have COPD¹.

- COPD was the fifth leading cause of death among Vermont residents in 2023².
- There were 2,358 visits for COPD by Vermont residents to Vermont and New Hampshire emergency departments in 2022^{3,4}.

Those with **COPD** are significantly more likely to report poor health, limit activities 14+ days per month, and be unable to work than those **without COPD**¹.

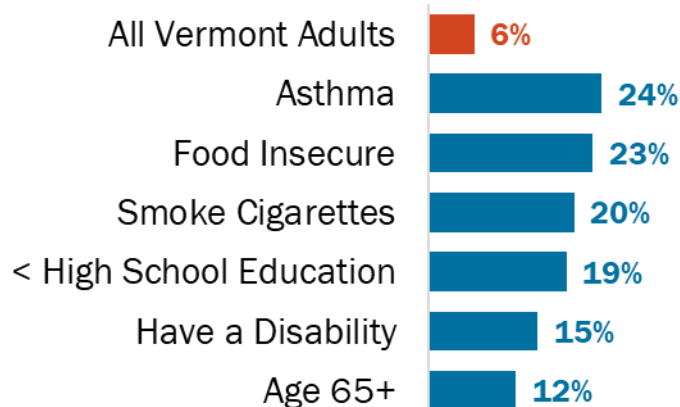


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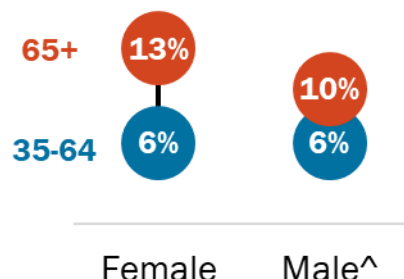


Certain groups are at higher risk for COPD.

% of adults in Vermont with COPD¹



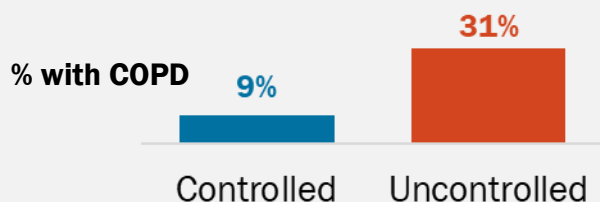
Age differences are only significant for females, with females **65+** being two times more likely to have COPD than those **35-64**¹.



Vermont adults with current asthma are six times more likely to have COPD than those without (24% vs. 4%)¹.



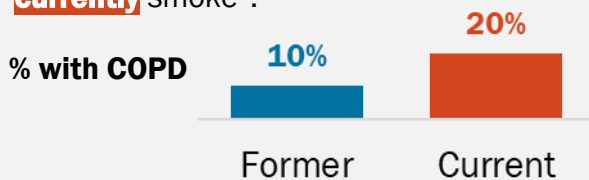
Adults with asthma are also nearly three times as likely to have COPD if their asthma is **uncontrolled**⁵.



Vermont adults with COPD are more than three times as likely to currently smoke cigarettes than those without COPD (33% vs. 9%)¹.



Those who have **quit** smoking have half the prevalence of COPD than those who **currently** smoke¹.



There are things you can do to prevent or improve COPD.



Early diagnosis and management of respiratory conditions like asthma are critical in preventing disease progression. **Schedule a checkup today.**



Smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke raises your risk for COPD. It is never too late to quit smoking. **Visit [802Quits.org](https://802quits.org) to learn more.**



Staying up to date on vaccinations can lower the risk of lung infections. **Talk to your provider to make sure your vaccines are up to date.**

Data Notes: All comparisons in this brief are statistically significant unless otherwise noted.

[^] Denotes a comparison that was **not** found to be statistically significant.

All analyses, conclusions, and recommendations provided here are solely those of the VDH and not necessarily those of the Vermont Uniform Hospital Discharge Data Set (VUHDDS) data steward: Green Mountain Care Board.

Data Sources: ¹Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System 2023, ²VT Vital Records 2023, ³VUHDDS 2022, ⁴New Hampshire Hospital Discharge Data 2022, ⁵Asthma Callback Survey