

# COPD AMONG OREGONIANS WITH DISABILITIES

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) damages airways in the lungs, which causes shortness of breath and other breathing-related problems.<sup>1</sup> COPD includes chronic bronchitis and emphysema. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 15 million Americans have developed COPD.<sup>2</sup> It is the third leading cause of death in both men and women in the U.S. and Oregon.<sup>3</sup>

The main causes of COPD include: tobacco use, air pollutants (including secondhand smoke, dust, and fumes), as well as genetic factors.<sup>1</sup> People who have COPD have symptoms such as chronic cough, excessive phlegm production, wheezing, and progressive shortness of breath that limits everyday activities.<sup>4</sup>

Unfortunately, there is no cure for COPD. However, eliminating tobacco smoke (the main cause of COPD) could prevent COPD and may reduce symptoms in people who already have COPD.<sup>5</sup> People with disabilities are at especially high risk for COPD. According to Oregon data

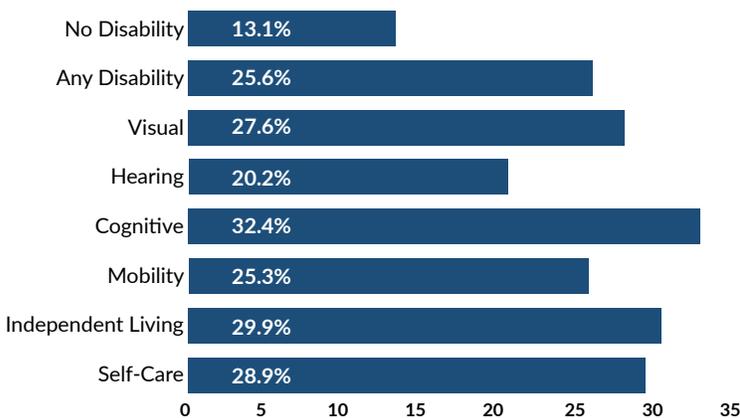
from the 2016 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), Oregonians with disabilities are more likely to smoke than Oregonians without a disability. The percent of adults with disabilities who smoke ranges from 20.2% to 32.4% depending on the type of disability (see Figure 1).

During 2016, 6.7% of adult Oregonians said they had COPD. Adults with disabilities were 5.4 times more likely to have COPD compared to adults without a disability (17.2% vs. 3.2%). Among people both under and over age 65, adults with disabilities have higher rates of COPD than adults without disabilities (See Table 1).

Disability Status	Age	
	18-64	65+
Disability	15.5%	20.6%
No Disability	2.6%	6.3%

\*2016 BRFSS: Respondents were asked "Have you ever been told by a doctor or health professional that you have COPD, emphysema, or chronic bronchitis?" Percentages shown are those who answered yes.

**Figure 1: Prevalence of Smoking among Disability Types, BRFSS 2016**



COPD is more common among women, people with lower income, and people with less education. These patterns are true for people both with and without disabilities. However, in every gender, income, and education category, people with disabilities are much more likely to have COPD compared to people without disabilities (See Table 2).

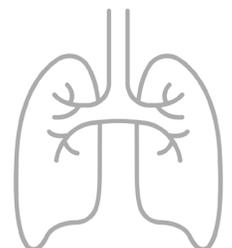
Policies and programs that help reduce tobacco smoking among Oregonians with disabilities may help decrease the number of people being diagnosed with COPD every year.

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Produced by: Oregon Office on Disability and Health





**Table 2. Prevalence of COPD\* by Sociodemographic Characteristics and Disability Status**

	Disability	No Disability
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	15.8%	3.0%
Female	18.3%	3.5%
<b>Income</b>		
< \$25,000	22.0%	4.9%
\$25,000 - \$50,000	16.2%	4.4%
> \$50,000	10.9%	2.0%
<b>Education</b>		
High School Graduate or less	18.7%	4.5%
Some College	17.6%	3.7%
College Graduate	11.6%	1.4%

If you have thought about quitting smoking, or know of someone who would like to quit smoking, the Oregon Tobacco Quit Line offers help 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) or [www.quitnow.net/oregon](http://www.quitnow.net/oregon)

**FOR MORE OODH DATA BRIEFS, VISIT:**

[HTTPS://WWW.OHSU.EDU/XD/RESEARCH/CENTERS-INSTITUTES/OREGON-OFFICE-ON-DISABILITY-AND-HEALTH/DATA-STATISTICS/](https://www.ohsu.edu/xd/research/centers-institutes/oregon-office-on-disability-and-health/data-statistics/)

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