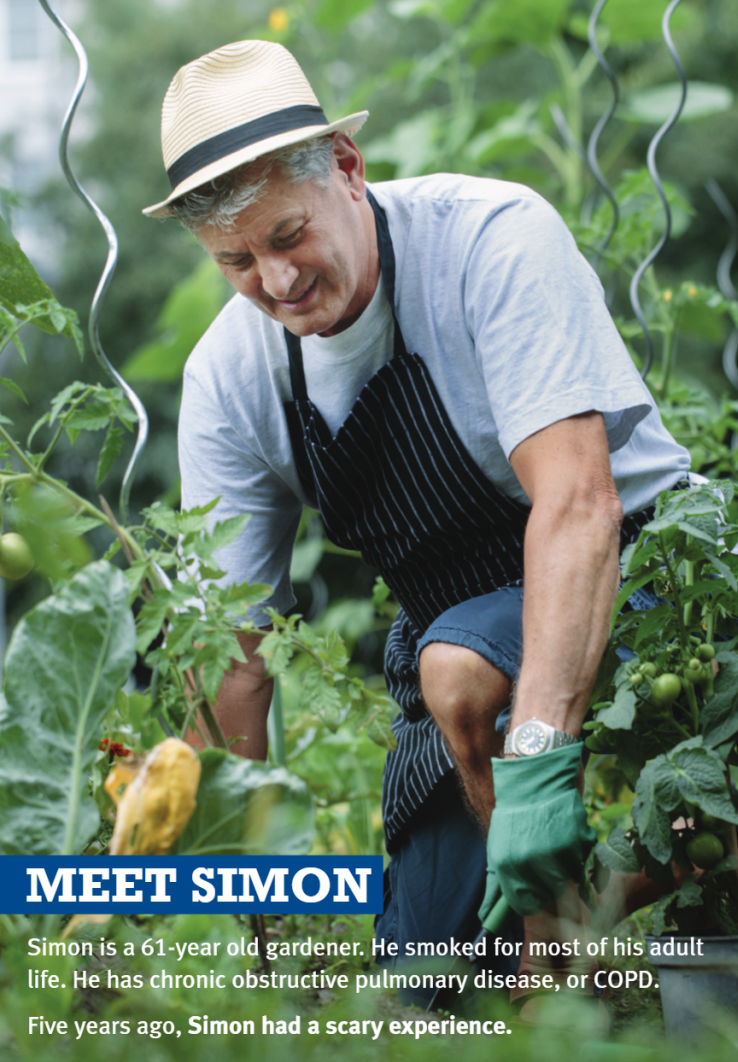


COPD EXACERBATIONS:

HOW SIMON LEARNED TO MANAGE THEM





MEET SIMON

Simon is a 61-year old gardener. He smoked for most of his adult life. He has chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or COPD.

Five years ago, **Simon had a scary experience.**

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WHAT IS A COPD EXACERBATION?

A COPD exacerbation means that your COPD symptoms suddenly get worse. Exacerbations are often caused by an infection, like a cold or a respiratory virus. Exacerbations can happen quickly, and they can be serious too. Even if your COPD doesn't seem that bad, there's still a chance that an exacerbation can cause you to visit your doctor or go to the hospital.

WHAT ARE THE WARNING SIGNS?

If you have an exacerbation, your breathing will get worse. You may also notice some other warning signs. These may include:

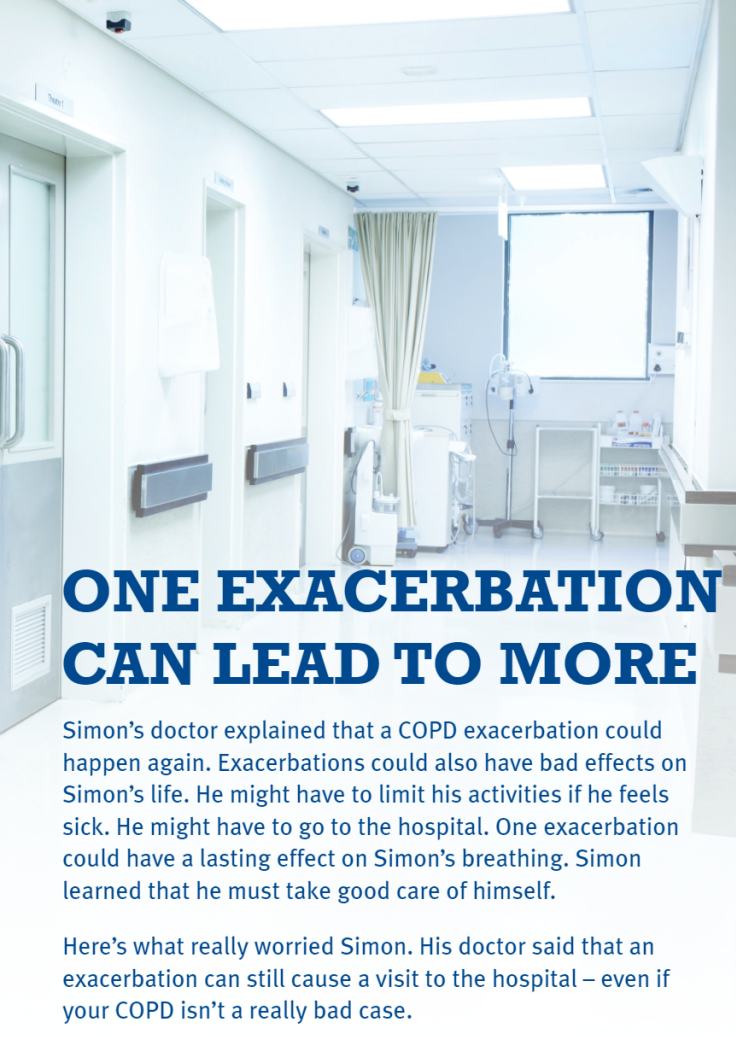
- Wheezing and/or coughing more than usual
- Shortness of breath that is worse than usual
- A change in the color or amount of mucus
- Faster or more shallow breathing than usual
- Feeling very tired

COPD EXACERBATIONS CAN AFFECT YOUR WELL-BEING

Simon's COPD exacerbation made his health worse. When he talked to his doctor, he learned more facts about COPD exacerbations.

If you have a COPD exacerbation, you may notice:

- It may be harder to breathe in the future
- You are more likely to have another exacerbation
- You may have to go to the hospital



ONE EXACERBATION CAN LEAD TO MORE

Simon's doctor explained that a COPD exacerbation could happen again. Exacerbations could also have bad effects on Simon's life. He might have to limit his activities if he feels sick. He might have to go to the hospital. One exacerbation could have a lasting effect on Simon's breathing. Simon learned that he must take good care of himself.

Here's what really worried Simon. His doctor said that an exacerbation can still cause a visit to the hospital – even if your COPD isn't a really bad case.

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SIMON AND HIS DOCTOR MAKE A PLAN

After talking with his doctor, Simon understood what he needed to do. First, he had to quit smoking. Simon was given a medicine to take every day, even when he felt well. His doctor called it 'maintenance treatment.'



DO

- ✓ Take medicine every day, even on 'good days'
- ✓ Exercise regularly
- ✓ Keep warm in cool weather, and keep cool in warm weather
- ✓ Eat a healthy diet
- ✓ Drink plenty of water
- ✓ Get a flu shot every year
- ✓ Get pneumonia and whooping cough shots when needed

**I feel better now.
I know to take my
medicine every day.
I'll be sure to follow
my doctor's advice
carefully.**



Questions? Talk to your doctor.

**Together you can work out the
best plan to manage your COPD.**

**For more information about
COPD, please visit:
www.goldcopd.org/patients.html**



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