

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Insert date]

Contact: [Insert contact name, phone and e-mail]

New data show COPD prevalence nationwide
In [INSERT STATE], [INSERT PERCENT] of residents report a COPD diagnosis

[Insert city] – According to just released data by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), [INSERT PERCENTAGE] percent of individuals in [INSERT STATE] have been diagnosed with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), compared to [INSERT PERCENTAGE] percent nationwide. COPD is currently the [INSERT RANK] leading cause of death in [INSERT STATE]. This is the first time data on COPD have been collected by CDC’s Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS) across all 50 states. The results will help focus resources to raise awareness about COPD and the benefits of early diagnosis and treatment.

COPD is currently the third leading cause of death in the United States. COPD, with its components of emphysema and chronic obstructive bronchitis, is a serious lung disease that over time makes it difficult to breathe. More than 12 million people are currently diagnosed in the US with COPD, but many patients remain undiagnosed.

“Having these data available for [INSERT STATE] gives us a better picture of who has been diagnosed with COPD – however many [INSERT STATE] residents currently suffer from symptoms of COPD but are undiagnosed,” said [INSERT ORGANIZATION SPOKESPERSON]. [INSERT 1-2 SENTENCES ABOUT OUTREACH YOUR ORGANIZATION CONDUCTS].

In [INSERT STATE], COPD is most prevalent among individuals ages [ENTER AGE] and higher and affects more [ENTER GENDER] ([ENTER PERCENTAGE]) than [ENTER OPPOSITE GENDER] ([ENTER PERCENTAGE]). Among all 50 states, the percentage of individuals suffering from COPD ranged from [INSERT LOWEST PERCENTAGE] in [INSERT STATE] to [INSERT HIGHEST PERCENTAGE] in [INSERT STATE]. The data indicate that [INSERT SEX] ([INSERT PERCENTAGE]) and [insert opposite sex] ([INSERT PERCENTAGE]) are diagnosed with the chronic disease nationwide.

Symptoms of COPD, such as shortness of breath, chronic coughing or wheezing, producing excess sputum, or feeling unable to breathe, come on slowly and typically worsen over time. Eventually, symptoms that were shrugged off as a normal sign of aging or being out of shape can become debilitating. However, early diagnosis and treatment of COPD have been shown to improve patient outcomes.

“This illustrates just how common, yet under-recognized, COPD really is. COPD can be treated, but early diagnosis is essential to improving quality of life,” said James P. Kiley, Ph.D., director of the Division of Lung Diseases at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). “It is important to be aware of the symptoms of COPD. And, if you or a loved one is exhibiting symptoms, talk to your health care provider about a simple breathing test called spirometry. It only takes a few minutes and could be done right in your doctor’s office.”

COPD most often occurs in people age 40 and over with a history of smoking (either current or former smokers), although as many as 1 out of 6 people with COPD never smoked. COPD can occur through long-term exposure to substances that can irritate the lungs, such as certain chemicals, secondhand

smoke, and dust or fumes in the workplace. COPD can also occur in people with a genetic condition known as alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency.

[INSERT ORGANIZATION] is working with the NHLBI to raise awareness about the disease as part of *COPD Learn More Breathe Better*[®]. The campaign was developed by NHLBI to educate Americans about the signs and symptoms of COPD, and encourage early diagnosis and treatment to improve quality of life. For more information about the campaign and resources, visit <http://COPD.nhlbi.nih.gov>.

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[Insert Organization Boilerplate (optional)]

About BRFSS: The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is a state-based system of health surveys established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that collects information on health risk behaviors, preventive health practices, and health care access primarily related to chronic disease and injury. Established in 1984, the BRFSS collects data on more than 350,000 adults each year and for many states is the only available source of timely, accurate data on health-related behaviors.

Resources:

[INSERT STATE-SPECIFIC BRFSS COPD FACTSHEET]

COPD: Are You at Risk? <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/lung/copd/campaign-materials/pub/copd-atrisk.pdf>