Should You Wear a Medical Alert Bracelet for COPD?

by AMERICAN MEDICAL ID

Medical Bracelet for COPD

COPD stands for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. It is an umbrella term for long-term or progressive lung diseases that includes emphysema, chronic bronchitis, and non-reversible asthma. COPD affects an estimate of 30 million of Americans and 64 million people worldwide.

While smoking cigarettes contributes to having COPD, people who have never smoked can also develop this disease. In fact, up to 25 percent of people diagnosed with COPD are non-smokers.

COPD Symptoms and Emergency Risks

People who are living with COPD experience a range of symptoms that include shortness of breath, frequent coughing, and chest pain. Sometimes, COPD symptoms become severe or “flare-up” and may require emergency treatment.

- Severe breathlessness
- Trouble breathing that prevents a patient from doing any activity or getting sleep
- Fever, shaking, or chills
- Confusion
- Drowsiness
- Chest pains
- Coughing up blood

Flare-ups can happen anytime and can be caused by a number of factors like weather and exposure to lung irritants like chemical fumes, dust, and pollution. It is for these reasons that people living with COPD are recommended to wear a medical identification bracelet or necklace.

A study published in *Science Direct* shows that COPD is expected to become the world’s third largest cause of mortality by 2030 and pose a challenge for emergency responders.

A former EMT, named Anne G. recently answered a question about why individuals with COPD should wear a medical alert bracelet. Her answer, “As a former EMT, if someone has COPD, you cannot give them the same amount of oxygen as someone who doesn't have it. COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) covers a whole host of lung problems including asthma and emphysema. If someone is unconscious, the bracelet will inform the responder that they have the illness.”

Benefits of Wearing a COPD Medical ID

1. **95 percent of emergency responders check for a medical ID around the neck or wrist.** Medical IDs are designed to be easily accessible by emergency personnel without having to search a patient’s

belongings.

2. **A medical ID can speak for a COPD patient even if they become unconscious.** Flare-ups can sometimes cause persons living with COPD to feel confused, dizzy, or faint. If oxygen levels plummet low enough, COPD can cause a person to faint or pass out. Medical IDs are engraved with important medical information and can effectively communicate this information to a responder, even if the person wearing it becomes unconscious or unable to speak.
3. **Alert responders of COPD medications**. Medical IDs can include information about COPD medication that a person is currently taking. This can help responders locate life-saving medicine or devices such as a patient's inhaler and also reduce the risk of unwanted drug interaction.
4. **Increase safety and peace of mind.** According to Veterans Health Library, having COPD should not stop anyone from traveling and enjoying themselves. The organization recommends having a medical ID bracelet as part of one's travel checklist.

Unlike before, medical IDs are now available in more styles that make them easier and more enjoyable to wear.

People living with COPD might opt to choose a medical alert bracelet vs. a necklace since a necklace may feel strangling when symptoms exacerbate. Here are some more tips on choosing a medical ID.

What to Engrave on a COPD Medical ID

It is important that a medical alert bracelet for COPD is custom engraved. Every person with a chronic obstructive pulmonary disease is different. A medical ID should only reflect medical information that is unique and true for its wearer.

What to put on a medical IDs engraving? Here are important tips:

1. **First or full name** allows the wearer to identify themselves in an emergency and provide a way for the responder to address them in an emergency.
2. **COPD and/or other medical conditions and allergies** that can affect the type of treatment that a patient could need in an emergency. If a person has several conditions, a doctor can give advice on which information is more pertinent to engrave and their common abbreviation.
3. **COPD medications** and other prescribed medicines that are taken on a regular basis. Examples of COPD medications are beta 2-agonists, anticholinergics, and methylxanthines. A medical ID can also help responders or good Samaritans to locate life-saving medications. If applicable, "inhaler in pocket" or "medication in bag" can be engraved.
4. **Emergency contact or doctor's contact details** can help emergency personnel notify loved ones about a patient's condition and if necessary, allow medical staff to request more health information.

If you're looking to purchase a medical bracelet for COPD, you can visit AmericanMedical-ID.com for further information.