

# Health Awareness

## Four Letters Every American Should Know: COPD

(NAPSA)—America's fourth-leading cause of death is one many people haven't heard of: chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). The lung disease, which includes chronic bronchitis, emphysema or both, kills more people every year than breast cancer and diabetes combined. Still, of the 24 million Americans who may have COPD, half don't know it.

These stark statistics inspired the creation of DRIVE4COPD, a multiyear health campaign to raise awareness of COPD and the need for early detection. The campaign encourages people to take a brief, five-question screener at [DRIVE4COPD.COM](http://DRIVE4COPD.COM) to see if they might be at risk for COPD and talk to their health care practitioner about their results.

"Taking the screener is a great first step to see if you might be at risk," says Brian Carlin, M.D., Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine, Drexel University School of Medicine. "It's important to find out early if you have COPD because once you lose lung function, you can't get it back. Once diagnosed, there are steps you can take to breathe better."

Spearheaded by campaign ambassador and NASCAR Nationwide Series™ driver Danica Patrick and sponsored by Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals, Inc., the DRIVE4COPD Race Team is in a year-long competition to screen the most people who may be at risk for COPD.

The Race Team includes Olympic Gold Medalist Bruce Jenner, Grammy Award-winning country music star Patty Loveless and Pro Football great Michael Strahan. Each has lost a loved one to COPD and has seen firsthand the impact of this disease.



**You can join Danica Patrick, Bruce Jenner, Patty Loveless, Michael Strahan and others in fighting chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.**

They are now calling on their fans to help them raise awareness of this progressive disease.

At [DRIVE4COPD.COM](http://DRIVE4COPD.COM), people can sign up to become DRIVE4COPD Ambassadors and access e-mails and messages to help encourage friends and family who are 35 and older to get screened for COPD risk. The DRIVE4COPD Ambassadors can join the team of their favorite celebrity and pledge the screeners they complete to be added to that team's tally.

Common symptoms of COPD include coughing, with or without mucus/phlegm, shortness of breath, wheezing and chest tightness. Breathing gradually becomes more difficult for people with COPD until they feel like they are inhaling and exhaling through a small straw. While there is no cure, early detection can help improve symptoms. Health care practitioners can help to develop individual diet and exercise programs that help people with COPD to lead fulfilling and active lives.

For more information, go to [DRIVE4COPD.COM](http://DRIVE4COPD.COM).