

# BREAKING THE SILENCE: NEW UNDERSTANDING AND COMMUNICATION IN COPD

Based on a conversation between Doctor Bartolome Celli and patient advocate Kristen Willard<sup>1</sup>

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## THE BURDEN OF COPD

COPD could affect your whole life, including your social interactions and emotional health; people often experience anxiety, panic, and fear.<sup>2</sup>



However, studies indicate that

— **89%** —

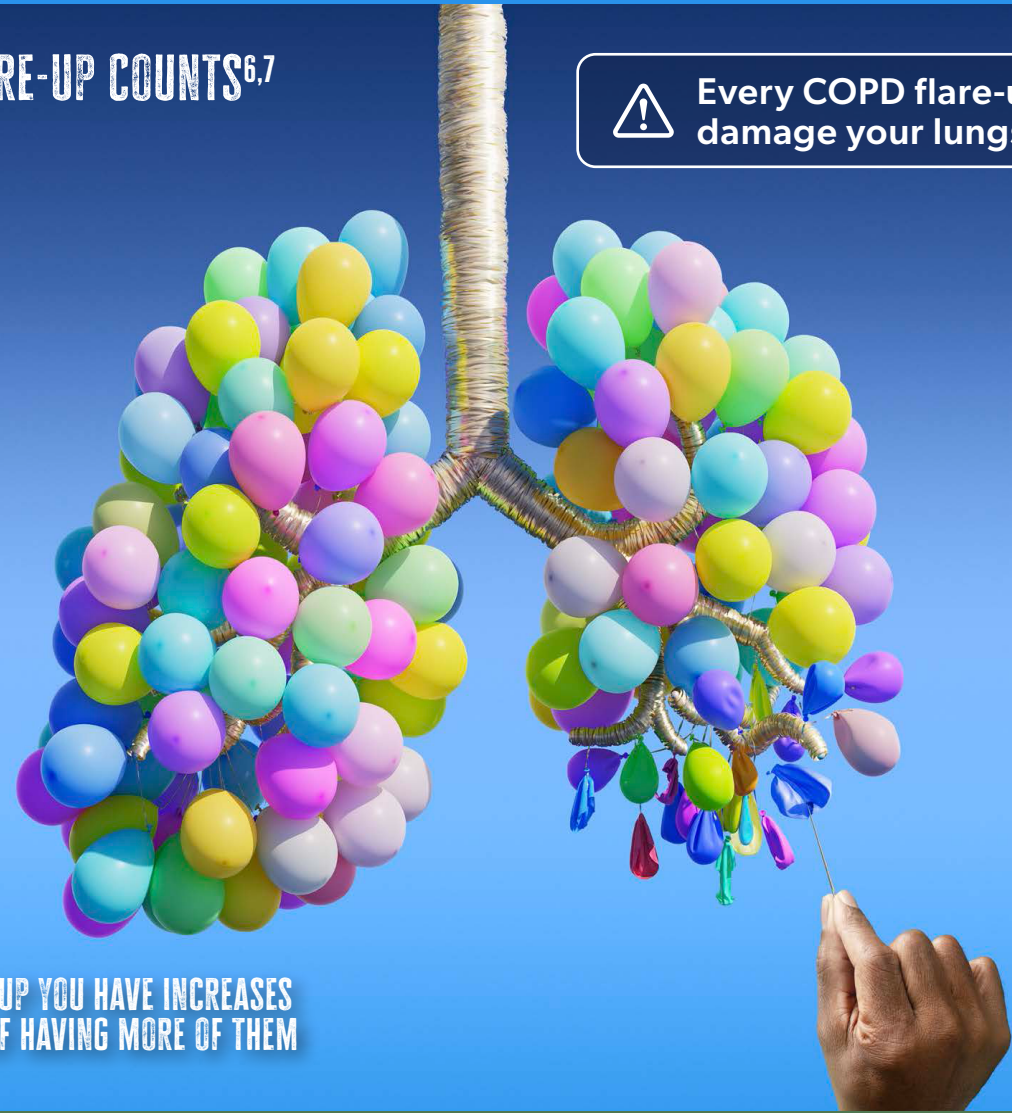
of people with COPD do not feel they can open up to their doctor about the full effect it has on their life.<sup>3</sup>

Healthcare professionals may not always be aware of the true impact of COPD on their patients. In terms of COPD affecting a patient's quality of life, approximately

— **74%** —

of patients with severe COPD perceive their quality of life to be very/completely limited by their illness, while only 51% of pulmonologists believe this to be true.<sup>3</sup>

## EVERY FLARE-UP COUNTS<sup>6,7</sup>



⚠ Every COPD flare-up can damage your lungs forever

EACH FLARE-UP YOU HAVE INCREASES YOUR RISK OF HAVING MORE OF THEM

## WHAT DOES YOUR DOCTOR NEED TO KNOW?

- Your doctor needs to know whenever your COPD symptoms worsen; i.e., when you have a flare-up<sup>5</sup>
- A flare-up is when your symptoms get worse over time and do not resolve with rest<sup>4</sup>



Flare-ups can range from mild to severe<sup>5</sup>



### MILD

you need more puffs from your rescue inhaler



### MODERATE

you need oral steroids and/or antibiotics



### SEVERE

you need to visit the ER and may be hospitalised

Mild/moderate flare-ups can be difficult to identify, but it's important to record them and report them to your doctor<sup>4</sup>

## NEW RESEARCH: COPD AND INFLAMMATION<sup>7,8</sup>

- Flare-ups are driven by chronic inflammation, which increasingly damages lung tissue
- We now know that there is more than one kind of inflammation in COPD
- A blood test can measure your eosinophil (EOS) levels to find out if this type of inflammation affects you



**“IN THE PAST, INFLAMMATION WAS NOT A WORD THAT WE USED WHEN DISCUSSING COPD. EVEN NOW, VERY FEW PEOPLE WITH COPD AND THEIR FAMILIES ARE AWARE OF THE ROLE THAT INFLAMMATION PLAYS IN THE ILLNESS (AND HOW IT) RELATES TO THEIR FLARE-UPS.”**

Kristen Willard,  
Vice President of Education, GAAPP

## CONCLUSION

It is crucial to track all your flare-ups and report them to your doctor, since they can cause permanent damage to your lungs.<sup>4,6,7</sup>

COPD can impact your ability to fully participate in life, but new ways to manage your disease may help change that.<sup>9,10</sup>

Now that we know the importance of inflammation in COPD, make sure to ask your doctor about EOS levels.<sup>5</sup>



## Abbreviations:

COPD: chronic obstructive pulmonary disease;  
EOS: eosinophil; ER: emergency room; GAAPP: Global Allergy & Airways Patient Platform

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## Credentials:

Bartolome Celli is a Pulmonologist and Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School who is well-known globally for his expertise in COPD management. Kristen Willard is a patient advocate and President of the Global Allergy & Airways Patient Platform (GAAPP).