

# TAKING CHARGE OF YOUR DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

## Taking Charge of Your Diagnosis and Treatment

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Going through the process to diagnose idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF) can be frustrating. On average, patients experience symptoms for nearly 2 years before being diagnosed. But by learning about the disease, how it's diagnosed, and how to manage it, you can be better prepared to deal with the challenges IPF brings.

### What It Takes to Diagnose IPF

[Diagnosing IPF](#) often requires a physical examination, a review of your medical history, and a variety of tests.



#### Medical History (past and present):

- Medical procedure
- Potential environmental exposures
- Prescribed medications
- Family medical history

#### Commonly Performed Tests:

- Blood tests
- Pulmonary function tests
- Chest x-rays (radiographs)
- A high-resolution CT scan (HRCT)
- A lung biopsy
- A bronchoscopy (examination of the



[Read more  
about these  
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[Read more about these tests](#)

### **What It Takes to Manage Your IPF**

Once you've been diagnosed with IPF, you'll want to read up on the [medical](#)

[treatment options](#) available to you, start monitoring and recording your symptoms, and prepare questions for your doctor. This will allow you and your medical team to better design the right program for you and to determine how well you're responding to treatment.

Talk with your doctor about how frequently you should be examined, and what you can do to best manage your disease.

## **Treating Your IPF Is Possible**

There are therapeutic strategies and treatments available that can help you manage your disease, including FDA-approved drugs.

Looking to learn about an FDA-approved treatment for IPF?

[Find out more](#)

Each IPF patient has unique needs depending on their medical history and other existing conditions. Therefore, your doctor's approach to managing your disease will be designed to meet your specific needs.

### **Treatment May Include:**

Lifestyle and Therapeutic Options

Pulmonary rehabilitation, oxygen therapy, and disciplined nutrition and other

lifestyle changes might be part of your daily prescribed disease treatment plan.

## Medical and Surgical Options

In addition to lifestyle changes and non-medical options, prescription medications may also be prescribed to help you with your IPF. Currently, there are [FDA-approved drugs for IPF](#) that reduce the decline in lung function and work to slow the progression of IPF. How do they do this? By slowing the decline in [forced vital capacity \(FVC\)](#). Talk to your doctor to find out if treatment is right for you.

Some patients may also be candidates for clinical trials. And for certain patients, lung transplantation may be an option.

## There Are Things You Can Do to Help Manage Your IPF

1

### Get Informed and Stay Informed

Research, reach out, and connect with experts and online [resources](#). The more informed patients with IPF are, the better they are able to manage the many physical, emotional, and spiritual challenges they and their loved ones experience throughout their IPF journey.

2

### Monitor and Track Your Symptoms

Keeping in tune with your body daily can help to lower your risk of complications and increase the

success of your IPF treatment. You will want to record changes in a whole host of symptoms, including: coughing, aches and pains, and your mood, along with any symptoms or side effects you might experience in relation to things like exercise, supplemental oxygen, and medication.



It could be helpful to record your symptoms and how your body is feeling.

[Download Our Symptom Tracker to Get Started](#)

3

## **Know What to Ask Your Doctor**

Begin a more meaningful conversation with your doctor by coming prepared with questions about IPF.

- Conversation Starters:
- What does IPF do to my lungs?

- Which diagnostic tests do you recommend?
- What course of treatment is right for me?
- Am I a candidate for supplemental oxygen?
- Am I a candidate for lung surgery?
- Is a clinical trial right for me?
- How often should I have follow-up exams and tests?



## Follow Your Doctor's Plan

You and your doctor can work together to create a course of action with your unique situation in mind. By following a customized plan, you'll be better prepared to deal with IPF and the difficulties it brings. Learn more about creating your own [Daily Roadmap](#).

## Connie's Story—Getting Answers

See how one patient took control of her health by continually pushing for answers. [Watch other videos about IPF](#)