

## SYMPTOMS OF IPF

# Symptoms of IPF

The symptoms and severity of idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF) will vary from person to person. However, here are a few signs and symptoms to look for:

### **Shortness of breath**

Also called dyspnea, this condition continues to worsen and many patients will require the use of supplemental oxygen

### **Chronic, dry, hacking cough**

The cough is usually dry and nonproductive (does not contain mucus)

### **Crackling breath sounds**

About 80% of people with IPF have a cough that is typically dry  
When listening to an IPF patient's lungs with a stethoscope, doctors hear what has been described as a Velcro-like tearing sound

### **Fatigue and weakness**

This symptom is common in all forms of interstitial lung disease

### **Loss of appetite/unexplained weight loss**

This symptom is common in all forms of interstitial lung disease

### **Clubbing of the fingertips**

The flesh under the fingernails gets thicker; this causes the nails to curve downward

- This happens in approximately 50% of people with IPF
- Believed to be the result of low oxygen levels in the blood

## How You Can Help Your Doctor

Symptoms of IPF, such as breathlessness, chest tightness, cough, and fatigue, can be similar to those of other diseases. For example, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and congestive heart failure (CHF) share some of these same symptoms. What's more, your primary care doctor may not have seen many (if any) patients with IPF before. In fact, up to 50% of cases of IPF are misdiagnosed.



Want to learn about the differences between IPF and COPD?

[Download This Helpful Comparison Guide](#)



If you have some or all of these symptoms, describe them carefully to your doctor. You may also want to consult a lung specialist (a pulmonologist). This type of doctor specializes in the treatment of lung disease. However, not all pulmonologists are experienced with IPF. This is why you may want to try to find one who is familiar with the diagnosis of IPF, the course of IPF, and the latest approaches to managing its symptoms.

With IPF, you may not even experience any symptoms at the early stages. However, most patients find that their lung function grows gradually worse over time. Some patients may experience “acute exacerbations.” This is when you experience a sudden, significant worsening of lung function and symptoms, with no apparent cause. These can lead to serious

consequences such as permanent loss of lung function and hospitalization. (Learn more about [exacerbations](#).)



Call **IPFandYou™** to get personalized support and questions answered.

**1-844-IPF-ANDU** [1-844-IPF-ANDU](#)  
(1-844-473-2638)

## **Connie's Story—Challenges and Frustrations**

See how one patient's frustrations with symptoms pushed her to talk with her doctor and find answers. [Watch other videos about IPF](#)

---