



**Welcome to the fall
2025 edition of the
Keystone Accountable
Care Organization
(ACO) newsletter!**

As we settle into the rhythm of autumn, it's a great time to refocus on our health and well-being. This month, we're shining a spotlight on chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) awareness, offering insights and resources to support those affected. With flu season approaching, we're also sharing practical tips to help you stay protected and boost your immunity.

In addition to health updates, we've included seasonal recipes, local wellness events and lifestyle tips to help you embrace the season with energy and positivity. Whether you're looking to nourish your body, connect with your community or simply stay informed, we hope this newsletter inspires you to take small steps toward a healthier you.

Stay well, stay warm, and enjoy all that fall has to offer!

November: Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) Awareness Month

What is COPD?

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease is a long-term lung disease that makes it difficult to breathe. COPD worsens over time and the damage it creates to the lungs is permanent, so it's important to get proper treatment.

The two main types of COPD are:

- **Chronic bronchitis:** With chronic bronchitis, the airways (also known as bronchial tubes) that bring air to your lungs become inflamed, resulting in a long-term cough with mucus and shortness of breath.
- **Emphysema:** Emphysema causes damage to air sacs (known as alveoli) in the lungs, making it difficult for them to stretch and work properly. With less air going in and out of your lungs, you feel short of breath.

Symptoms

While one of the first signs of COPD is shortness of breath, some people may not experience symptoms until the disease is more advanced.

Other symptoms may include:

- A persistent cough
- A cough with mucus or phlegm
- Wheezing when you breathe
- Frequent colds
- Extreme tiredness
- Tightness in your chest
- Swollen feet, ankles, or legs
- Blue lips or fingernails

Causes

Certain behaviors and risk factors can increase your chances of developing COPD. These include:

- **Smoking:** This is the most common cause of COPD. You can also develop COPD from breathing in secondhand smoke.
- **Pollution and fumes:** Those who breathe chemical fumes, dust or toxic substances are at a higher risk.
- **Asthma:** Those who have asthma that isn't well managed are at a higher risk of developing COPD.
- **Age:** Most people are 40 years or older when their COPD symptoms appear.
- **Infections:** If you have had a lot of respiratory infections, your chances of developing COPD are greater.

Diagnosing COPD

Your doctor will start by discussing your symptoms with you, listening to your lungs for wheezing and may perform further tests to confirm your diagnosis.

Tests may include:

- **Spirometry:** This test allows your doctor to measure the amount of air you breathe in and out. During this test, you'll be asked to take a deep breath and blow into a mouthpiece connected to a small device.
- **Chest X-ray:** This allows your doctor to see the condition of your lungs, heart, and blood vessels.
- **Chest CT scan:** Like an X-ray, a computed tomography (CT) scan also creates an image of your chest but shows more detail.
- **Blood test:** Your doctor may order a blood test called an arterial blood gas analysis. This shows them how much oxygen and carbon dioxide are in your blood.



Treatment

If you're diagnosed with COPD, we'll work with you to create a treatment plan that's focused on helping you reduce flare-ups and breathe better.

Depending on your situation, one or more of the following treatments may be recommended:

Lifestyle changes

If you smoke, your doctor will recommend that you quit as soon as possible. Other lifestyle changes that may help you manage your COPD include:

- Learning different breathing techniques to ease shortness of breath
- Eating a healthy, balanced diet
- Exercising regularly
- Drinking plenty of water

Medications

- Your doctor may prescribe certain medications, such as short- or long-acting bronchodilators (often in the form of inhalers), inhaled steroids, oral steroids or combination inhalers.
- Medications used to treat COPD work to relax the muscles around the airways, reduce airway inflammation and ease coughing and shortness of breath.

Pulmonary rehabilitation

- A team of pulmonologists, nurses, dietitians and respiratory therapists will help you learn how to better manage your COPD.

Oxygen therapy

- Your doctor may recommend that you use supplemental oxygen, like a small, portable oxygen tank.

4 flu season etiquette tips to keep you (and everyone else) healthy

Flu season normally lasts from October until May and peaks between December and February. The flu is extremely contagious and can be dangerous for some. However, there are some things you can do to prevent the spread of the flu.

1. Get a flu shot now

Getting a flu shot is the best thing you can do to prevent getting the flu. Flu shots not only help you stay healthy, but they also help others too. The flu vaccine creates something called “herd immunity,” where those who receive the shot prevent the spread of the virus, thus protecting those who can't get vaccinated for medical reasons. A flu shot is necessary every year to protect against the flu virus as it changes.

2. Keep your hands to yourself

Wash your hands throughout the day, especially before eating. Be conscious of what you touch and wipe down surfaces that collect germs, such as keyboards, doorknobs and phones. Most importantly, avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.

3. Watch where you sneeze

The best way to avoid infecting others is by sneezing into the crook of your elbow. This helps keep germs trapped somewhere other people likely won't touch.

4. Stay home when you're sick

Even if you feel able to work, stay home and rest. Heading into work sick poses a risk to you and to everyone around you.



COPD word find

J	F	R	R	O	T	A	L	I	D	O	H	C	N	O	R	B
R	E	L	A	H	N	I	H	N	Y	S	S	D	T	S	X	L
E	M	P	H	Y	S	E	M	A	E	U	P	S	O	M	S	T
K	O	Y	A	R	T	L	O	U	C	B	I	Y	P	D	D	V
N	A	X	P	M	O	N	G	U	Y	T	U	U	Y	R	P	T
O	R	L	Y	H	E	T	M	F	I	X	L	L	N	F	O	Q
I	X	D	U	G	L	F	A	H	M	S	C	H	I	G	C	E
T	N	J	R	N	E	E	C	R	E	S	V	I	G	Z	E	X
I	D	Q	B	P	N	N	G	O	T	B	B	M	F	G	E	E
R	O	Y	A	L	O	A	X	M	G	N	I	K	O	M	S	R
T	W	P	S	R	H	I	C	G	T	Y	E	W	X	X	C	C
U	C	Y	B	P	M	W	Q	L	L	M	C	C	F	K	U	I
N	D	Z	U	E	N	E	J	O	A	M	W	I	N	A	M	S
K	J	L	T	D	J	E	N	D	V	S	A	C	J	O	S	E
I	D	R	O	Z	Y	U	A	J	D	N	A	V	V	W	C	Q
T	Y	S	P	I	R	O	M	E	T	R	Y	N	A	M	L	M
H	K	S	D	I	O	R	E	T	S	O	C	I	T	R	O	C

Corticosteroids

Bronchodilator

Pulse oximetry

Nasal cannula

Concentrator

Spirometry

Bronchitis

Nutrition

Nebulizer

Emphysema

Exercise

Dyspnea

Smoking

Inhaler

Phlegm

Oxygen

Mucus

CPAP

COPD



Tiny apple tarts for two

YIELD: 2 tarts

Ingredients:

Dough:

- 2/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/8 tsp table salt
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, cold
- Up to 2 tablespoons ice water

Filling:

- 1 medium firm, tart apple, like Pink Lady or Honeycrisp
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar, divided, plus, more for sprinkling
- 1 teaspoons lemon juice, divided
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
- 1/4 teaspoons apple pie spice
- Pinch of table salt
- 1 large egg, beaten with 1 tablespoons water for egg wash
- 2 teaspoons cold, diced, unsalted butter

Finishing (optional)

- 1 teaspoons apricot jam
- 1 teaspoon water

Instructions:

1. To make the dough: In a medium bowl, use a fork to stir together the flour and salt. Using the large holes of a box grater, grate the butter directly into the bowl, then use your fingers to tease the butter strands apart and coat them in flour.
2. Add 1 tablespoon of the water and stir with the fork until it's evenly distributed. Add the remaining 1 tablespoon water in 1-teaspoon increments, stirring with the fork between each and stopping when the dough forms large clumps and holds together when squeezed.
3. Transfer the dough to a piece of plastic wrap or reusable wrap and gently knead and fold it together to form a cohesive mass.
4. Divide the dough in half (about 85g per piece) and form each into a 3" disk. Wrap the disks individually and chill until firm, for at least 30 minutes.
5. To make the filling: Halve and core the apple (no need to peel). Cut one half into very thin slices (1/8" to 1/16" thick). Transfer the slices to a small bowl and toss with 1 tablespoon sugar and 1/2 teaspoon lemon juice. In a separate small bowl, grate the other half of the apple. Add the remaining 1 tablespoon sugar and 1/2 teaspoon lemon juice along with the flour, apple pie spice and salt. Stir to combine.
6. On a lightly floured piece of parchment, roll each chilled dough disk into a 6" round. Divide the grated apple mixture between the rounds (about 1/4 cup each), spread it into an even layer in the center and leave a border of about 1" of bare dough around the edge. Arrange the apple slices on top of the grated apple (about 1/2 cup per tart), overlapping them in concentric circles to form a rose shape.
7. With a sharp knife, cut 1" slits from the edge of the dough to the start of the apple slices, working around the circumference of each tart and spacing the slits about 2" apart. Fold the flaps toward the center, then press lightly to seal.
8. Use the parchment to transfer the tarts to a baking sheet, then refrigerate, uncovered, until firm, at least 30 minutes and preferably 1 hour.
9. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 425°F with a rack in the center.
10. Brush the dough with egg wash (or cream, milk, or beaten egg white), then sprinkle the tarts all over with sugar (about 1/2 teaspoon each). Distribute the diced butter evenly over the apple slices.
11. Bake the apple tarts for 20 to 25 minutes, until they're deeply golden brown. Some pooling butter around the base of the tarts is OK. Remove the tarts from the oven and let cool directly on the baking sheet.
12. For a shiny finish, combine the apricot jam and water in a small bowl and microwave for 15 to 20 seconds, until melted. Lightly brush over the apple slices.
13. Serve the tarts slightly warm or at room temperature, with a scoop of vanilla ice cream, if desired.
14. Storage information: These mini apple tarts are best the day they're baked. Store any leftovers airtight at room temperature for 2 days; reheat briefly in the oven until warmed through.



Medicare beneficiaries may select their primary care provider (PCP) on the [medicare.gov](https://www.medicare.gov) website. The how-to video is located on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/AZ7h-rqshG4>. The video includes step-by-step instructions for locating and identifying a PCP on a person's [medicare.gov](https://www.medicare.gov) account. CMS has also completed a Spanish language version of the same video. It is available to use in conjunction with the Spanish language Medicare.gov site, <https://es.medicare.gov/>. The direct link to the Spanish video is <https://youtu.be/baCO37UqJHU>.

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Schedule appropriate preventive screenings:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mammograms | <input type="checkbox"/> Colonoscopies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eye exam | <input type="checkbox"/> Dental visits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Wellness Visit | <input type="checkbox"/> Flu/COVID vaccines |

Geisinger Wellness Events

Event	Start	End	Event Location	Day	Time
Culinary Medicine Classes	Varies	Varies	Virtual and in-person (Susquehanna Valley Mall)	Varies	Varies
A Matter of Balance	9/8	10/27	65 Forward Kingston*	Monday	1 – 3 p.m.
Drive-through flu shots	9/13	9/13	Various	Saturday	9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Drive-through flu shots	10/4	10/4	Various	Saturday	9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
A Matter of Balance	10/15	12/3	65 Forward Shamokin Dam*	Wednesday	1 – 3 p.m.
Drive-through flu shots	10/18	10/18	Various	Saturday	9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Register at geisinger.org/events or by calling 866-415-7138 (PA relay 711).
The programs are free.

* Must be 65 or older.

To reach us:

Ph. 570-271-6403. You will then be offered a few options to help you get connected to the appropriate person. Select option 1 for newsletter/website related question or issues, 2 to talk with our operations director, or remain on the line to speak with our administrative assistant.

Email: KeystoneACO@KeystoneACO.org



Neighborly

Neighborly is an easy-to-use online network that helps you connect to free and reduced-cost programs and services, including food, housing, childcare, transportation, utility assistance, education, healthcare, legal services and financial assistance.

Go to neighborlypa.com, where you can also download the app.



Need help affording your medications?

Programs are available for those who meet certain financial requirements, and some pharmaceutical companies offer reduced pricing on certain drugs based on financial need. Call 570-808-4704 for help.



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Medicare Resources

To contact Medicare for information on accountable care organizations, call 800-Medicare (800-633-4227) and ask for the ACO Department. TTY users should call 877-486-2048. Or visit medicare.gov/acos.html

To contact Keystone ACO, call 570-271-6403 or email keystoneaco@keystoneaco.org