

## **Epidemiology of COPD in the Middle East and East Africa (MEA)**

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Morbidity and mortality from COPD is expected to rise in the MEA over future decades, primarily due to the growth in the prevalence of smoking, the widespread use of the biomass fuels to cook indoors, seasonal air pollution and waterpipe use. The prevalence of smoking is about 30%, reaching up to more than 50% in countries like Lebanon. The prevalence of COPD in this area is about 4%. The rate of acute exacerbation is 47.5%.

The main problem of COPD in this area is under – diagnosis, inadequate evaluation and inadequate treatment. Less than 10% of the treatment used is compliant with the COPD guidelines. 54% of the patients are class D and 28% of patients are kept out of work by their respiratory problem. Also, 50% of the patients reported comorbidities (32% cardiovascular comorbidities). Between one third and two thirds of the patients reported limitation of the daily activities.

Many patients are poorly informed about COPD and its management. 30% are not sure about the cause of their problem. 50% of the patients do not acknowledge smoking as a potential cause of their disease. Also, 30% of the patients have not discussed giving up smoking with their physicians.

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