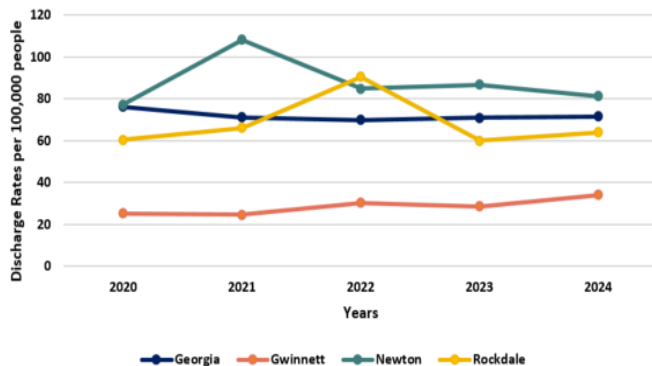
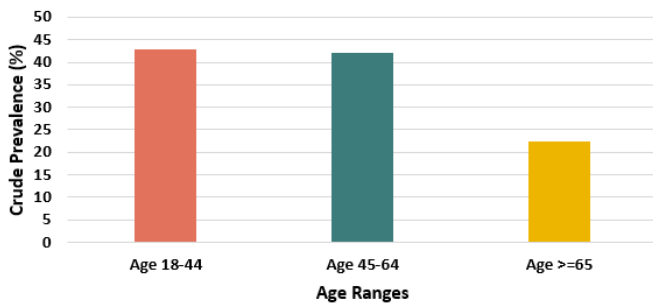


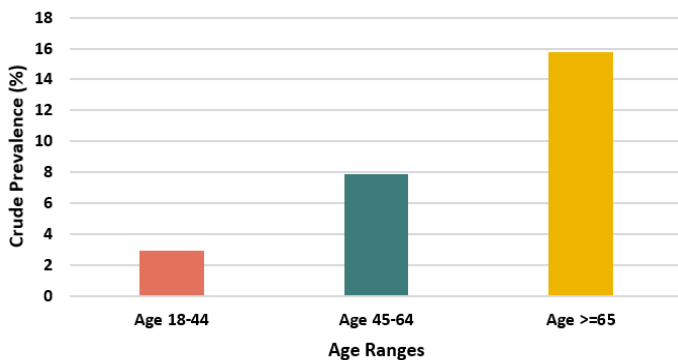
Age-Adjusted COPD Discharge Rates in GNR & Georgia, 2020-2024<sup>3</sup>



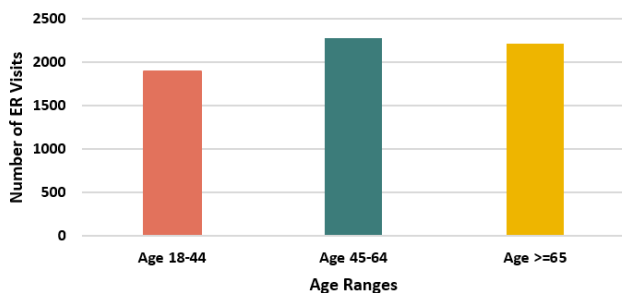
Smoking Prevalence among Adults with COPD by Age in GA, 2021<sup>5</sup>



COPD Among Adults by Age in GA, 2022<sup>5</sup>



Deduplicated ER Visits at GNR Public Health by Age, 2020-2024<sup>3</sup>



Sources:

<sup>1</sup>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). *Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)*. <https://www.cdc.gov/copd/about/index.html>. Retrieved April 28th, 2026.  
<sup>2</sup>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). *Chronic Disease Indicators*. <https://www.cdc.gov/copd/about/index.html>. Retrieved April 28th, 2026.  
<sup>3</sup>Georgia Department of Public Health. Online Analytical Statistical Information System (OASIS). <https://oasis.state.ga.us/>.  
<sup>4</sup>Mayo Clinic. (n.d.). *COPD*. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/copd/symptoms-causes/syc-20353679>. Retrieved April 28th, 2026.  
<sup>5</sup>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). *Chronic Disease Indicators*. <https://www.cdc.gov/cdi/>

## COPD

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) is a group of chronic lung diseases that obstruct proper airflow into the lungs, making it difficult to breathe. Left untreated, these progressive diseases gradually worsen over time and can lead to difficulty working, walking, concentrating and eventually lead to significant long-term effects and death. Although long-term exposure to smoke, chemical fumes, dust or chemicals can cause COPD, the most common cause is cigarette smoke. Patients with COPD are at an increased risk for respiratory infections, heart disease, hypertension and lung cancer.<sup>1</sup>

### Symptoms and Risk Factors

- Shortness of breath
- Wheezing or whistling sounds when breathing
- Ongoing cough with mucus
- Swelling in legs, ankles and feet
- Chest tightness
- Frequent lung infections

Nearly 16 million U.S. adults have COPD, and many more do not know they have it.<sup>1</sup> Risk factors for COPD include tobacco smoke, asthma, workplace exposure, fumes from burning fuel and genetics. The two common types of COPD that can develop factors are emphysema and chronic bronchitis.

### Emphysema

- Causes the deterioration of the thin walls of the air sacs in the lungs making it difficult for air exchange in the lungs.

### Chronic Bronchitis

- Causes the bronchial tubes to be inflamed and narrowed resulting in decreased oxygenation and build up of mucus

### Treatment and Management

Lifestyle changes and treatment can improve COPD symptoms and overall quality of life.<sup>2</sup> Quitting smoking and protecting yourself from harmful fumes, vapors and dust can help you breathe better and reduce further harm to the lungs. Additionally, being vaccinated for common respiratory diseases, such as influenza and pneumonia, can help prevent certain respiratory diseases which could exacerbate COPD illness.<sup>4</sup>