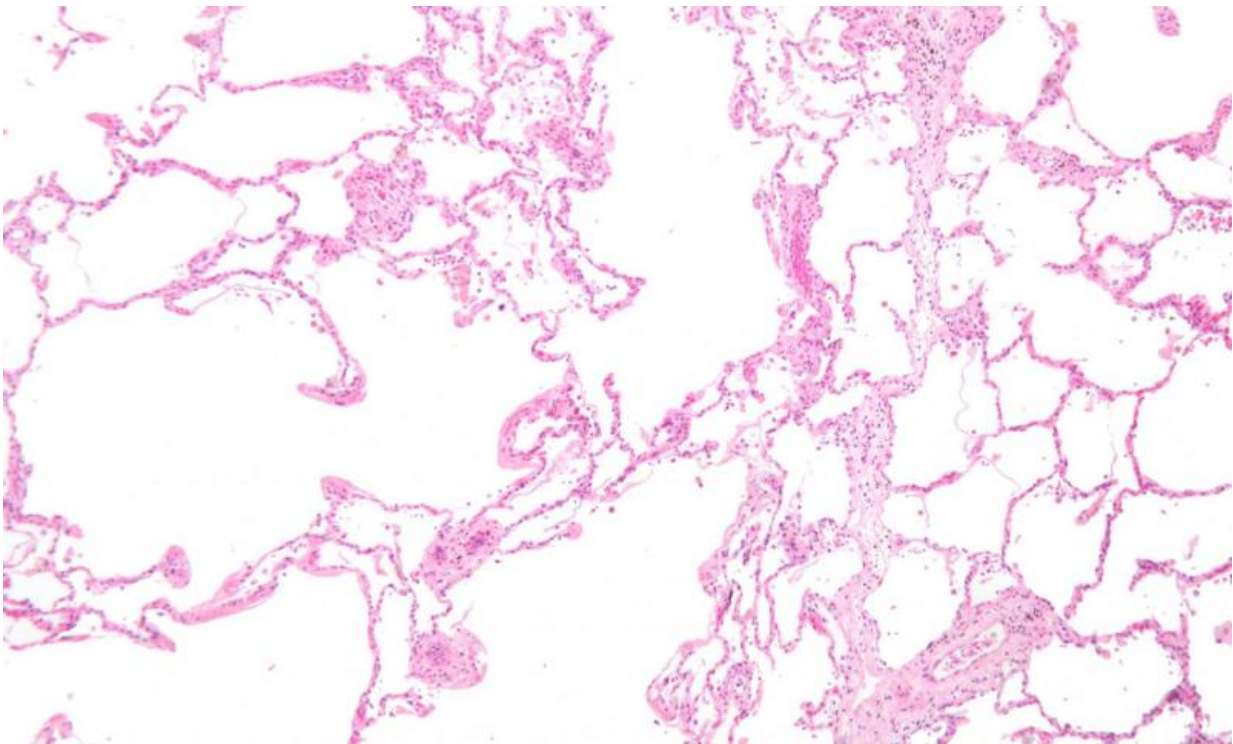


# Number of nonsmokers with COPD on the rise

April 9 2019

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Micrograph showing emphysema (left – large empty spaces) and lung tissue with relative preservation of the alveoli (right). Credit: Wikipedia, CC-BY-SA 3.0

The global burden of COPD is high, and prevalence of nonsmokers with COPD has been increasing. In a study to be presented at CHEST Congress Thailand 2019, researchers in Nagpur, India, sought to describe the characteristics of nonsmoking patients with COPD and to

determine associated comorbidities and exposures.

Researchers examined 180 nonsmoking [patients](#) with COPD between the years of 2016 and 2018. Each patient was categorized into either mild, moderate, severe and very severe COPD, based on their responses to Global Initiative for Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease (GOLD) guideline questionnaires.

In this cohort, the percentage of mild, moderate, severe and very severe patients were 26%, 53%, 58% and 43%, respectively. The most common comorbidity among nonsmoker COPD was hypertension (34.4%) followed by diabetes mellitus (17.8%). Most of the patients (61%) lived in [rural areas](#), while 38% belonged to urban areas. Forty six percent of patients had [exposure](#) to biomass gas, while 26% had exposure to toxic gases. These results support that exposure to biomass fuel is a major contributing factor to COPD and a higher risk among the rural population.

"Exposure to industrial smoke, [environmental pollution](#) and household smoke are major contributors for COPD in nonsmokers," says Dr. Sameer Arbat, lead researcher. "There is a need to study this subset of nonsmokers having COPD further to determine the true cause of this increase."

Further results from this study will be shared at CHEST Congress 2019 in Bangkok on Friday, April 12, at 3:00 p.m., in the Exhibition Hall. The study abstract can be viewed on the [journal CHEST website](#).

**More information:** S. Arbat et al, CLINICAL PROFILE OF NONSMOKER PATIENTS WITH COPD, *Chest* (2019). [DOI: 10.1016/j.chest.2019.02.203](#)

Provided by American College of Chest Physicians

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