

UNDERSTANDING THE BASICS OF IPF

IDIOPATHIC PULMONARY FIBROSIS

Idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis (IPF) is a rare, serious lung disease that is a certain type of pulmonary fibrosis (PF). In PF, the lung tissue becomes thickened, stiff, and scarred. The medical term used to describe this scar tissue is fibrosis. In some cases, doctors can determine the reason for the fibrosis. But when there is no known cause, the disease is called IPF.



Idiopathic (id-ee-o-PATH-ick)

adj. No known cause for medical condition

IPF is an interstitial lung disease (ILD). This means that it affects the interstitium—the medical term for the space around the alveoli (air sacs) inside your lungs. There are more than 200 types of ILDs, with many of them causing symptoms similar to IPF. But IPF is one of the most common types of ILDs.

Unfortunately, there is no cure for IPF. But you and your doctor can work together to find ways to help treat your IPF.

HOW IPF AFFECTS YOUR LUNGS

Your body needs a steady supply of oxygen to function properly. Supplying oxygen-rich blood to your cells is your lungs' main role. In a person with IPF, the scarring and thickening (fibrosis) in the lungs occurs in the spaces between the air sacs, called alveoli. Making it more difficult for the alveoli to transfer enough oxygen into the bloodstream.

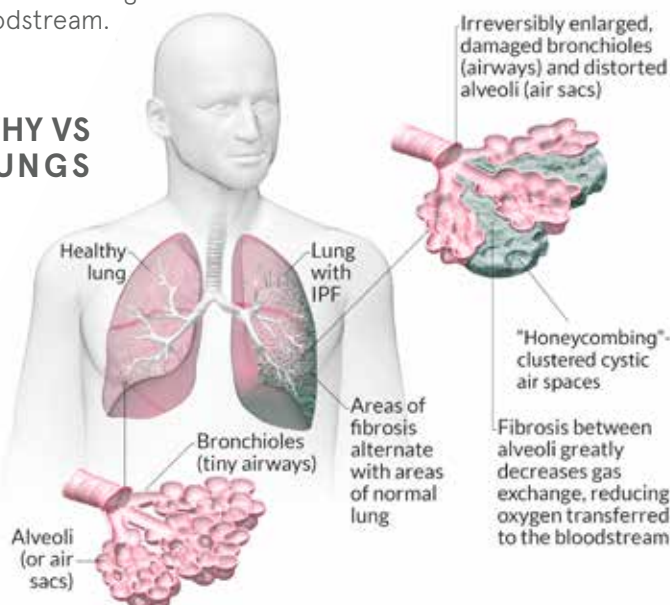
Basically, the lungs aren't able to do their job as well as they should. Meaning that the brain, heart, and other organs may not get the oxygen they need to function properly.

The scarring seen in IPF is sometimes referred to as "honeycombing."

This is because that's what it looks like when researchers examine a sample of an IPF patient's lung. Honeycombing can now typically be seen with a high-resolution computed tomography (HRCT) scan.

As scarring increases, the lungs stiffen, which decreases their volume. This limits how much air the lungs can take in. It also reduces the amount of oxygen that can be transferred into the bloodstream and reduces the amount of oxygen that can reach vital body organs.

HEALTHY VS IPF LUNGS



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SCARRING THAT OCCURS WITH IPF IS IRREVERSIBLE

Your lungs' ability to function decreases over time, making it more and more difficult to breathe. As IPF progresses, you will most likely require oxygen therapy or possibly even a lung transplant, if you're eligible at the time it becomes necessary.



Oxygen therapy



Lung transplant

ACCURATE DIAGNOSIS IS CRITICAL

IPF is often misdiagnosed because its symptoms are similar to asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and congestive heart failure.

It's important to get a correct diagnosis as soon as possible. While there is no cure for IPF, by working with your doctor, there are things you can do to help manage the symptoms of IPF.

If appropriate, your doctor may prescribe care to help treat—and possibly reduce—common IPF symptoms such as breathlessness. These treatments may include oxygen therapy and pulmonary rehabilitation.

Your doctor may also prescribe treatments to help manage other conditions you may have in addition to IPF (these are called "comorbid conditions"). Together, all of these approaches may enable you to live as active a life as possible given your condition.

**OVER
50%** of IPF cases
are initially
misdiagnosed

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