

Each year, almost 135,000 die from smoking-related chronic lung disease, experts say.

WEDNESDAY, July 30, 2014 (HealthDay News) -- Medical costs for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) in the United States are more than \$32 billion each year, according to new research from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The yearly financial toll of COPD (which includes emphysema and chronic bronchitis) is expected to reach an estimated \$49 billion by 2020.

"For the first time, our analyses provide state-specific costs for COPD, which provide state public health practitioners with estimates of the economic burden of COPD within their borders and illustrates the potential medical and absenteeism costs savings to states through implementing state level programs that are designed to prevent the onset of COPD," Dr. Earl Ford, of the CDC's division of population health, said in a news release from the journal CHEST.

Medical costs associated with COPD were primarily paid for by Medicare. The CDC found Medicare covered 51 percent, while Medicaid paid for 25 percent and private insurance covered 18 percent of these costs.

The findings were reported online recently in the journal CHEST.

COPD forced Americans to miss an estimated 16.4 million days of work, costing nearly an additional \$4 billion, the CDC found.

COPD and other chronic lower respiratory diseases are the third-leading cause of death in the United States, according to the news release.

Roughly 80 percent of COPD-related deaths are due to smoking. In 2010, the condition claimed almost 135,000 lives in the United States. The following year, it was estimated that nearly 13 million adults in the United States have COPD. Since nearly 24 million adults show signs of impaired lung function, researchers believe that COPD remains under-diagnosed.

"Evidence-based interventions that prevent and reduce tobacco use and reduce clinical complications of COPD may result in potential decreased COPD-attributable costs," Ford said.

More information

The U.S. National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute provides more information on [COPD](#).

SOURCE: The American College of Chest Physicians, news release, July 24, 2014

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