

## **COPD-ALERT SUPPORTS THE GLOBAL CELEBRATION OF 2010: THE YEAR OF THE LUNG**

The Year of the Lung Campaign Promotes Awareness of Lung Diseases, Seeks Better Funding and Therapies

The COPD-ALERT joins with the American Thoracic Society (ATS) and lung health organizations around the globe for 2010: The Year of the Lung, a multi faceted campaign that aims to raise awareness about the importance of lung health, generate social and political support for preventing and treating lung disease and encouraging increased public and private funding for lung disease research and development.

Led by the American Thoracic Society and the Forum of International Respiratory Societies, this campaign is a global effort to unite lung health advocates and convey the urgency of the threat lung disease poses to the public's health and to galvanize support that will bring about the development of new and more effective prevention strategies and treatments for the benefit of hundreds of millions people.

The COPD-ALERT, a patient support and advocacy organization, speaks for more than 12 million diagnosed and at least as many undiagnosed people suffering from the Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), a progressively debilitating disease which every year claims the lives of more than 125,000 persons in the United States alone. COPD is the fourth major cause of death and the continually climbing numbers will push it into the third place by the year 2020. The available treatment is insufficient and there is no cure for this disease. COPD is also the second major cause of disability and it is a great economic burden on the economy (more than \$42 billion per year in direct and indirect costs).

With hundreds of millions of people suffering each year from lung disease, raising awareness about the importance of lung health is critical – there is a huge need to transform the way people think about and treat their lungs. Heart disease, HIV/AIDS, and most forms of cancer have benefited greatly from increases in public awareness and have seen more treatments developed and more lives saved, as a result. Lung health has long been neglected in public discourse and rates of people affected by lung disease, especially COPD, are increasing at an alarming rate globally. As Mishka Michon, Chief Executive Officer of the Coalition for Pulmonary Fibrosis, stated: “It is our hope that the year's effort will drive home the urgency of the need for expanded investment in treating lung diseases, which has not been a priority for the federal government.” See the alarming research funding disparity in the National Institutes of Health [budget](#).

2010: The Year of the Lung is a call to action to policy makers, donors and researchers for increased awareness of lung disease while reducing the stigma associated with it, increased funding for lung health R&D by the public and private sector, and improvement in diagnosis time and treatment outcomes for lung disease patients.

About 2010: The Year of the Lung

2010: The Year of the Lung is a multi faceted campaign that aims to raise awareness about the importance of lung health, generate social and political support for preventing and treating lung disease and encouraging increased public and private funding for lung disease research and development. The campaign was convened by a coalition of lung health advocates who recognize that the lungs have been neglected too long in public discourse. For more information on 2010: The Year of the Lung, please visit [www.yearofthelung.org](http://www.yearofthelung.org).

About the COPD-ALERT

COPD-ALERT is a nonprofit, unincorporated, patient-led support and advocacy organization on the Internet. Its membership is primarily U.S.-based with quite a few members from other countries. Founded in 2000, it promotes better funding for research and development of effective treatment options, patient and caregiver education, and advocates jointly with medical professional organizations and other stakeholders for greater awareness in the general public and government bodies as well as legislative support in the Congress. COPD-ALERT is among the largest patient support groups and it partners with most respected medical and healthcare organizations and researchers. COPD-ALERT is represented in the American Thoracic Society, American College of Chest Physicians, and the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. Its members attend and speak at national and international lung conferences, publish about COPD, are on the boards of national lung foundations and coalitions as well as members of editorial boards of lung publications. COPD-ALERT has two websites: [www.copd-alert.com](http://www.copd-alert.com) (open access) and for members only. Membership is free. To join write to [copd-alert-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:copd-alert-subscribe@yahoogroups.com).