



# The global status of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a leading cause of mortality and morbidity worldwide (1). However, the status of COPD in each country varies. For example, the awareness of COPD in public differs between countries (2). Pulmonary function test (PFT) is a key component of COPD diagnosis. However, there is a huge difference in PFT performance rate worldwide (3). Also, inhalers are essential medication in COPD treatment. In spite of that, inhalers are not prescribed enough in some countries.

Smoking is a main cause of COPD. However, there are also several other causes for the development of COPD. The degree of biomass smoke exposure differs between countries. The low lung growth during childhood is also an important risk factor for COPD (4). However, the causes of low lung growth are various in each country. Moreover, the prevalence of childhood infection including tuberculosis also differs country by country.

The healthcare policy also can influence the epidemiology and management of COPD. The policy for smoking cessation can dramatically change the future incidence of COPD (5). The reimbursement criteria of inhalers in some countries such as Korea highly influences the prescription rate (6). Also, the government policy for air pollution affects the rate of acute exacerbation.

In spite of these worldwide differences, there have been few attempts to collect and review the worldwide aspect of COPD. In this focused issue, we did our best to invite world renown COPD experts from various regions and to review different aspects of COPD in the world. We do appreciate the efforts of all authors in this focused issue.

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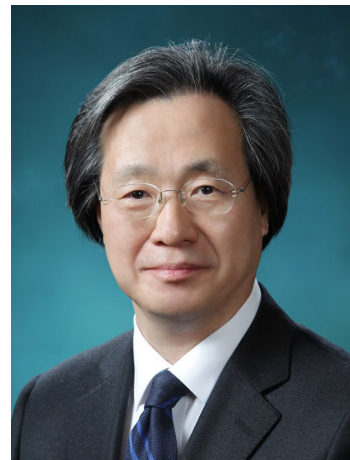
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