

The Expanding Role of the Allergist as Biologist

The Immunology of COPD and Overlaps with Asthma

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COPD is generally considered to be a

- Common preventable and treatable disease
- Characterized by airflow limitation that is
 - Not fully reversible
 - Usually progressive
 - Associated with an abnormal inflammatory response to noxious particles or gases
- Associated with exacerbations and comorbidities which contribute to its overall severity

Many of these features including airflow limitation, airway inflammation, and the importance of comorbidities which impact both disease severity and approaches to treatment, are similar in both asthma and COPD, with some differences in the expression of these factors. Similarly, the same drugs are used to treat both diseases, with some differences in strategies identified to use them. While making a specific diagnosis is considered an optimal approach to optimize the approach to treatment, clinical strategies can be designed to approach patients with airflow limitation with less than complete patient characterization.