

Alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency

Alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency is an inherited disorder that may cause lung and liver disease. The signs and symptoms of the condition and the age at which they appear vary among individuals.

The following signs and symptoms of lung disease generally develop between the age of 20 and 50 years:

- shortness of breath following mild activity
- decreased exercise tolerance
- wheezing
- unintentional weight loss
- recurring respiratory infections
- fatigue

Affected individuals often develop emphysema, a lung disease caused by damage to the alveoli. Smoking or exposure to tobacco smoke accelerates the appearance of emphysema symptoms and damage to the lungs.

For further information, go to the Alpha 1 Association - <http://www.alpha1.org.au/>