

LEARN ABOUT

CHRONIC BRONCHITIS



This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider.

What is Chronic Bronchitis?

- Chronic bronchitis is a long-term lung disease where airways stay swollen and filled with mucus
- People often cough and have trouble breathing for months at a time, and over several years
- It's a type of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease that makes it hard to breathe

Acute vs. Chronic Bronchitis

- Acute bronchitis happens suddenly and usually goes away in a few days or weeks. It's often caused by a virus like a cold or the flu. Acute bronchitis can also be caused by bacteria
- Chronic bronchitis happens frequently and lasts for years. It's usually caused by smoking or breathing in dirty air

Symptoms

Main symptoms of chronic bronchitis:

- A cough with mucus that won't go away.
- Wheezing is a whistling sound when breathing
- Shortness of breath
- Fast heartbeat
- Feeling very tired
- Chronic bronchitis isn't contagious but catching a cold or the flu can make it worse

How to Prevent it

- Don't smoke, avoid secondhand smoke, pollution, and manage breathing problems

When to See a Doctor

Go to a doctor if you:

- A cough that lasts more than 3 weeks
- Keep feeling short of breath or wheezing a lot
- Have a high fever (103 degrees Fahrenheit or higher), or a fever that lasts more than 5 days.
- Coughs up blood