
Questions & Answers

Q: Is bronchitis contagious?

A: Acute bronchitis is contagious. You can spread it by coughing into the air or touching others with germs on your hand. Some helpful tips include using tissues when you cough, and washing your hands after you cough or wipe your nose or mouth.

Q: How can I prevent bronchitis?

A: You can reduce the risk of getting bronchitis by eating healthy foods, exercising regularly, washing your hands frequently, and avoiding damp, cold, polluted places. Also try to avoid others who may be sick as best as you can, and remember don't smoke.

Q: Should I stop taking antibiotics if my symptoms go away?

A: No. It's important for you to take the antibiotics for the entire period as prescribed by your doctor. If you stop the medication too soon, you run the risk of a relapse.

Mission Statement

The Pat Walker Health Center, University Health Services provides professional and comprehensive medical care, mental health care, health education, and health promotion for a diverse community of students, faculty, and staff. We, the University Health Services Staff of the Pat Walker Health Center, have a commitment to physical, mental, spiritual, social, and emotional health, the highest standards of quality, and appreciation of the value of each individual. Through these endeavors we support the educational mission of the University of Arkansas and the growth of each individual.

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BRONCHITIS



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Your bronchial tubes carry air from your mouth and throat to your lungs. Bronchitis is an inflammation of the lining of the bronchial tubes. This inflammation causes the bronchial tubes to swell and mucus (also called phlegm) to form in these airways. This produces a constant cough. Because the swelling reduces airflow to and from your lungs, you also may have difficulty breathing.

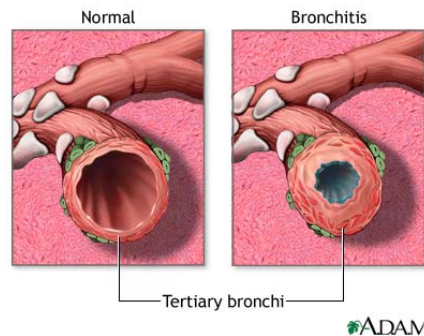
There are two kinds of bronchitis:
Acute and Chronic

Acute bronchitis is usually caused by a **viral** infection. Antibiotics are not helpful in treating viral infections. They may last longer, however, if you smoke, have heart disease live in an area with high air pollution, or have other health problems. Acute bronchitis most often strikes young children, the elderly, smokers, and people with heart and lung disease.

While cigarette smoking is the most common cause, some people with *chronic bronchitis* may have initially had a bacterial or viral infection. Others develop it if exposed to elements that are harsh on the lungs. Bronchitis is classified as chronic when the mucus-producing cough lasts for 3 months, and it recurs for more than one year.

SYMPTOMS

- Persistent cough with mucus
- Pain in chest when breathing deeply
- Wheezing or breathlessness
- Fever
- Headache
- Chills
- Sore muscles



CONVENTIONAL TREATMENTS

- Use an inhaler with medication
- Take pain medication to relieve fever, headache, or chest pain
- Take cough suppressants with an expectorant
- Drink a lot of liquids
- Use a vaporizer, humidifier, or steam from hot water to add moisture to the air
- Get plenty of rest
- Stop Smoking



You should see your doctor if ...

- You have a bad tasting fluid come up into your mouth.
- You feel very sick and weak, and you have a high fever that doesn't go down.
- You cough up blood.
- You have trouble breathing when you lie down.
- Your feet swell.

Your doctor may prescribe an antibiotic to treat your bronchitis if you have a bacterial infection.

