



What is Acute Bronchitis?

Bronchitis occurs when the airways of the lungs swell and produce mucus. That's what makes you cough. Acute bronchitis, often called a "chest cold," is the most common type of bronchitis. The symptoms last less than 3 weeks. Antibiotics are not needed to treat acute bronchitis. Using antibiotics when not needed could do more harm than good.

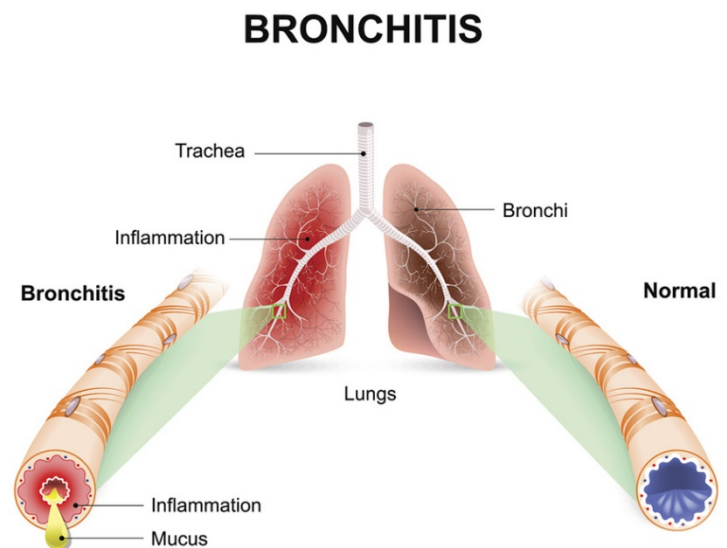
If you're a healthy person without underlying heart or lung problems or a weakened immune system, this information is for you.

What are the symptoms of Acute Bronchitis?

- Coughing with or without mucus production

You may also experience:

- Soreness in the chest
- Fatigue (feeling tired)
- Mild headache
- Mild body aches
- Watery eyes
- Sore throat



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What causes Acute Bronchitis?

- Acute bronchitis is usually caused by a virus and often occurs after an upper respiratory infection.
- Bacteria can sometimes cause acute bronchitis, but even in these cases antibiotics are not recommended and will not help you get better.

When should I seek medical care?

See a healthcare professional if you or your child have any of the following:

- Temperature higher than 100.4 °F
- Cough with bloody mucus
- Shortness of breath or trouble breathing
- Symptoms that last more than 3 weeks
- Repeated episodes of bronchitis

What is the recommended treatment?

Acute bronchitis almost always gets better on its own—without antibiotics.

Using antibiotics when they aren't needed can do more harm than good.

Unintended consequences of antibiotics include side effects, like rash and diarrhea, as well as more serious consequences, such as an increased risk for an antibiotic-resistant infection or *Clostridium difficile* infection, a sometimes deadly diarrhea.

What can I do to feel better?

- Get plenty of rest
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Use a clean humidifier or cool mist vaporizer
- Breathe in steam from a bowl of hot water or shower
- Use lozenges (do not give lozenges to children younger than 4 years of age)

- Ask your healthcare professional or pharmacist about over-the-counter medicines that can help you feel better

Remember, always use over-the-counter medicines as directed. Do not use cough and cold medicines in children younger than 4 years of age unless specifically told to do so by a clinician

Your clinician will most likely prescribe antibiotics for a diagnosis of whooping cough (pertussis) or pneumonia.

What can I do to prevent contracting bronchitis?

- Practice good hand hygiene
- Keep you and your child up to date with recommended vaccines
- Don't smoke and avoid secondhand smoke, chemicals, dust, or air pollution
- Always cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing
- Make sure you and your child are up-to-date with all recommended vaccines

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Adapted from CDC. *Bronchitis* Access at: <https://www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use/community/for-patients/common-illnesses/bronchitis.html>

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