

Discharge Instructions for Chronic Bronchitis



You have been diagnosed with chronic bronchitis. With this condition, you cough up mucus for 3 months or more each year for at least 2 years in a row.

Home care

Here is how you can take care of yourself at home:

Quit smoking, if needed

If you smoke, get help to quit. This is the best thing you can do for your bronchitis and health.

- Try a stop-smoking program. There are even telephone and online programs.
- Ask your healthcare provider about medicines or other methods to help you quit.
- Ask family members to quit smoking as well.
- Don't allow smoking in your home, in your car, or around you.
- Don't use e-cigarettes.

Protect yourself from infection

- Wash your hands often. Do your best to keep your hands away from your face. Most germs are spread from your hands to your mouth or nose.
- Ask your healthcare provider about the flu and pneumonia vaccines.
- Stay away from crowds. It's very important to do this in the winter when more people have colds and flu.
- Take care of your overall health. That means:
 - Getting about 8 hours of sleep every night
 - Exercising for at least 30 minutes on most days
 - Eating lots of fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as whole grains, lean meats and fish, and low-fat dairy products. Also, don't eat foods filled with fat and sugar.
 - Limiting the amount of alcohol you drink

Work with your healthcare provider

- Take your medicines exactly as directed. Don't skip doses.
- Talk with your healthcare provider about ways to keep your mucus thin. Drinking a lot of water helps.
- Talk with your healthcare provider about long-term oxygen therapy.
- Ask your healthcare provider to show you pursed-lip breathing. It can help decrease shortness of breath.
- During each care visit, talk with your healthcare provider about your ability to:

- Cope in your normal environment
 - Correctly use inhaler techniques (or your medicine delivery systems) to make sure you are doing them right
 - Cope with other health problems you may have, including the medicines you take for them and how they might affect your chronic bronchitis
- Find out about pulmonary rehab programs in your area. Ask your provider or local hospital. Also talk to your healthcare provider about a self-management program to help control your symptoms.

Follow-up care

Follow up with your healthcare provider as advised.

When to call your healthcare provider

Call your provider right away if you have any of these:

- Coughing
- Increased mucus
- Yellow, green, bloody, or smelly mucus
- Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, or as directed by your healthcare provider
- Chills
- Swollen ankles

Call 911

Call 911 if you have:

- Worsening shortness of breath, wheezing, or trouble breathing that doesn't get better with treatment
- Tightness in your chest that doesn't go away with your normal medicines, or as directed by your healthcare provider
- A new, irregular heartbeat or feeling that your heart is racing
- Trouble talking
- Feeling of lightheadedness or fainting
- Feeling of doom
- Skin turning blue, gray, or purple in color

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