

Bronchitis, an Overview

In 1808, Charles Bedham described and named bronchitis. For many years this condition affected many people. But because of newer developments in the field of medicine, people now have more alternatives to treating the said condition.

Pulmonary disorders are quite common especially in children. But this doesn't mean that adults can't have the disorder. In fact, those that live in polluted cities, especially smokers, are prone to it. If your bronchi are inflamed, then you may have bronchitis, which is widely known as an obstructive pulmonary illness or disorder.

Bronchitis is divided into short-term or acute and the long-term or chronic types. How will you know if you have bronchitis? There are symptoms associated with the disorder including expectorating cough, dyspnea, malaise and/or fatigue, mild fever and chest pains, coldness, and vibrating chest.

People of all ages may have bronchitis. Those that have frequent flu and colds tend to have this condition. If your immune system is weak, you are at a greater risk to major complications like asthmatic and chronic bronchitis, and it would be a lot easier for pneumonia to settle in.

As mentioned earlier, bronchitis can be acute or chronic. To diagnose and treat bronchitis properly, the pulmonary specialist must be more detailed with their diagnosis and understanding of various diseases and illnesses.

As a responsible individual, you must be aware of the symptoms so that when you or a family member exhibits such symptom, you can identify them easily and seek the help of medical professionals. It is best to act on the condition at an early stage to avoid any complications.

Acute Bronchitis

Acute bronchitis has symptoms similar to flu and lasts for a short term only. People who have viral infections may be susceptible to acute bronchitis. Acute bronchitis is contagious and usually begins by having dry cough that occurs at night. In a matter of days, the cough will progress and the person can suffer from fatigue, fever, and headache. The cough might take several weeks; but for some it might even take months because the healing process is very slow in the bronchial tubes.

If you've been suffering the cough for over a month, your doctor can refer you

to an ENT expert to find out if there are other causes of irritation. If your bronchial tubes are always irritated, it can lead to asthmatic conditions.

With acute bronchitis, the passageways constrict because of the infection caused by a virus or bacteria. If it is caused by a bacteria, then giving the right antibiotic regimen can make the person well. You must visit your doctor to get accurate diagnosis because administering any medicine without doctor's prescription can make the disorder worse.

If you experience persistent wheezing and cough, then you might have acute bronchitis. If you have constricted bronchial tubes, you can hear a wheezing sound every time you breathe. The disorder clears up after a few days but it can also last for over a week. Make sure that you take a rest and drink lots of juices or water.

As a simple home remedy, you can put wet blankets and towels inside the house to increase humidity or you can opt for room humidifiers. Smokers who happen to have acute bronchitis should quit smoking to heal faster and don't make his condition even worse.

Chronic Bronchitis

This condition is ongoing. It can take months, or even years, for the condition to last. Due to environmental factors like exposure to smoke, fumes, odors, and dust can lead to chronic bronchitis. Chronic bronchitis has no cure; therefore patients having the condition must avoid the triggers and make considerable changes in their surrounding environment. You must be able to identify the 'triggers' and you can do this with the help of your doctor.

When you consult a doctor, several laboratory tests will be performed including chest x-rays, test for pulmonary function and blood gases in the arteries, and the sputum culture. Usually, these tests are also performed for patients with acute bronchitis.

Chronic bronchitis can be prevented only if you try to change some of your bad habits including smoking.

Nothing beats a healthy and active lifestyle. If you practice preventive measures, then you can avoid getting bronchitis or any other illness.