

Bronchiectasis: Management plan

A self help guide to managing your bronchiectasis

Patient Name: _____

GP contact: _____

Hospital Number (RXK): _____

Respiratory Consultant name/contact: _____

What is bronchiectasis?

Bronchiectasis is a condition where the bronchial tubes are permanently damaged, widened and thickened. This allows bacteria and mucous to build up and pool in your lungs, which can result in frequent infections/flare ups, and/or blockages of the airways.

What causes Bronchiectasis?

Previous severe infections such as Pneumonia, Whooping Cough and Tuberculosis can cause Bronchiectasis. Inflammatory Bowel Disease, Immune System deficiencies, some types of Arthritis, a problem with the fine hairs called Cilia in your lungs, inherited disorders, a problem with the normal structure or function of the lungs, Asthma, COPD and Sarcoidosis can also cause Bronchiectasis.

Often, no clear cause is found.

What are the symptoms of Bronchiectasis?

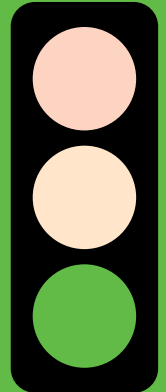
Symptoms can take months or years to develop, and gradually become worse. The most common symptoms are cough and Sputum (mucous) production. Other symptoms include coughing up yellow and green Sputum and breathlessness which can get worse during flare ups.

Bronchiectasis: Management plan

A self help guide to managing your bronchiectasis

How to Manage Bronchiectasis

- Be Diligent taking your medication
- Perform Chest Clearance 2 times daily, using techniques taught by your healthcare professional
- Maintain a healthy balanced diet
- Stay hydrated, drinking plenty of water or squash to help prevent mucous build up
- Avoid contact with people who are unwell with a cold, flu, COVID or a chest infection
- Ensure you have your yearly flu vaccination, your COVID and Pneumococcal vaccinations
- Attend follow up appointments with your GP or Hospital or Community Respiratory Team
- Do not smoke and avoid smoky environments

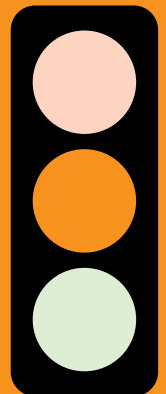


Signs of a flare up - If for more than 48 hours you...

- Feel unwell with coughing up more Sputum than is normal for you
- OR
- Your Sputum changes colour and consistency
- OR
- You are more breathless than usual

Make sure you:

- Contact your GP, or if you have a rescue pack then consider starting it
- Send a Sputum sample to the Hospital or your GP as soon as possible. If you can't send it the same day, you can keep it in the fridge and send it the next day. Ask your GP/Respiratory Nurse for Sputum pots.
- Take your antibiotics for 14 days, or as directed by your doctor
- Perform your chest clearance 4 times a day to clear the extra Sputum from your lungs
- Some Colds get better without needing antibiotics. If there is no change in the colour, amount or consistency of your Sputum, then do not start antibiotics.
- Drink plenty of water or squash to help the Sputum from getting too thick. Avoid caffeinated drinks
- Contact your Community Respiratory Nurse, Hospital Respiratory Nurse, or your GP if you are not improving or need advice or guidance.
- Continue your medications as prescribed including inhalers if you have them.



Bronchiectasis: Management plan

A self help guide to managing your bronchiectasis

Signs you are very unwell:

- Coughing up lots of blood

OR

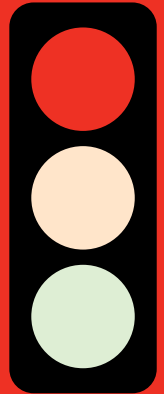
- Confused, agitated or drowsy

OR

- Chest Pain

OR

- Extremely breathless and breathless whilst talking, at rest or with very minimal movement.



CALL YOUR EMERGENCY GP OR 999

Collect a Sputum sample if able and commence your antibiotics without waiting for your Sputum result.

My symptoms:

Cough...

I normally...

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Never cough | <input type="checkbox"/> Every day |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cough one or two days a week | <input type="checkbox"/> Cough only with chest infections |

Sputum...

I normally bring up Sputum...

- | | | |
|---|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Only with chest infections | <input type="checkbox"/> One or two days a week | <input type="checkbox"/> Every day |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A few days of a month | <input type="checkbox"/> Most days of the week | |

Normally my Sputum colour is...

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clear | <input type="checkbox"/> Light yellow | <input type="checkbox"/> Dark yellow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White | <input type="checkbox"/> Light green | <input type="checkbox"/> Dark green |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dirty colour/off colour/grey | | |

Normally the daily volume of my Sputum is...

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 teaspoon | <input type="checkbox"/> An eggcup |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 tablespoon | <input type="checkbox"/> More than an eggcup |

Bronchiectasis: Management plan

A self help guide to managing your bronchiectasis

Normally the consistency of my Sputum is...

- Watery Thick Sticky

Normally my Sputum is...

- Easy to bring up Difficult to bring up

Breathlessness

I get breathless when I...

- Walk around the home When I have a chest infection
 Walk outside on the flat I never become breathless
 Walk up a flight of stairs I have poor mobility

Other symptoms

I tend to...

- Wheeze Feel tired Have fatigue

Questions for my next Respiratory Clinic appointment

My Drug Allergies

Drugs I haven't tolerated

My regular Medication

My Rescue Medication/ Rescue pack Medication(s)

Bronchiectasis: Management plan

A self help guide to managing your bronchiectasis

Pathogens grown in Sputum including dates

Pathogen	Dates

Contact Number

Hospital Respiratory Nurses

0121 507 5953 or 0121 507 3981

Community Respiratory Nurses

0121 507 2664

Further Information

British Lung Foundation

Bronchiectasis

<https://www.blf.org.uk/support-for-you/bronchiectasis/what-is-it>

(Website accessed 28 February 2022)

References

British Thoracic Society. (2018). BTS guideline for bronchiectasis in adults. Available at: <https://www.brit-thoracic.org.uk/quality-improvement/guidelines/bronchiectasis-in-adults/> (Accessed 28 February 2022)

If you would like to suggest any amendments or improvements to this leaflet please contact SWB Library Services on ext 3587 or email swbh.library@nhs.net.



A Teaching Trust of The University of Birmingham
Incorporating City, Sandwell and Rowley Regis Hospitals
© Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust

ML6415
Issue Date: August 2022
Review Date: August 2025