

Your Bronchiectasis Self-Management Action Plan

Information and advice for patients

Community Respiratory Service

Contacts	Name	Telephone
Community Respiratory Team	Phone the community services contact centre	0121 507 2664
GP		
Hospital Specialist Doctor		

What is the Self- Management plan?

A self-management plan is a plan to help you:

- Keep yourself well
- Monitor your symptoms
- Know how to manage a flare- up (exacerbation) of your illness

What are the benefits?

It will help you keep as healthy as possible with the best quality of life possible, to help reduce the frequency of exacerbations and hospital attendances, and give you education/information to know what to do and who to contact when you are exacerbating. It will also help to slow the disease progression.

What are the risks?

There are no risks when following a self-management plan.

What are the risks of not following the plan?

If you choose not to follow our advice, it may lead to increased chest infections, increased hospital admissions, quickened disease progression, which will ultimately affect your quality of life.

Are there any alternatives to this plan?

There is no other alternative to this plan.

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During the treatment

After discussing with you about your self-management plan, it is up to you to read and follow the advice given and show it to other health professionals that you see.

Follow-up

You can phone our service for advice when needed . The contact numbers can be found in the Contact Details section.

Contact details

Community Respiratory Service

Contact details

Monday to Friday 8.00am - 6.00pm Dial 0121 507 2664 and select option 4 then option 1

Monday - Friday 6pm - 8pm, Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays 8.30am - 4.30pm Dial mobile 07866360145

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Bronchiectasis self-management Action plan

When you are well and stable, the following actions will help you to stay healthy and reduce the risk of developing a flare up:

- **Keeping Active:**

Being active will give you more energy and reduce shortness of breath. You need to pace yourself to save energy and rest after meals. Plan your day and rest during or in-between activities. Pulmonary Rehabilitation is recommended for all patients with Bronchiectasis if breathlessness affects their daily activities of living.

Attended / Attending Pulmonary Rehabilitation Course at:

Performing a Home Exercise Programme Yes No

- **Keep up to date with Vaccinations:**

Annual Flu vaccination date _____

Once only Pneumonia vaccination date _____

- **Stop Smoking:**

I am a: Smoker Ex-smoker

I have been referred to stop smoking services Yes No

- **Daily Chest Clearance Exercises**

Clearing your chest of phlegm every day is very important, as it will reduce your chances of having frequent chest infections, reduce your coughing, make you feel less breathless, less fatigued during activities and ensure you have a better night sleep.

I was shown chest clearance exercises by a Physiotherapist on

Please contact our service if you feel the exercises are not working anymore or you need a reminder of how to do them.

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- Take your medication and inhalers, if on them, as prescribed and never allow medicines to run out.
- Keep a rescue antibiotic course at home - this should be a two week course
- Avoid visiting anyone who is unwell with a cold, flu or chest infection.
- Keep a supply of sputum pots and their collection forms in the house.
- Know how much sputum you cough up usually, and its colour.

My usual bronchiectasis medication:

Medication	Prescribed dose		Delivery device: e.g. spacer, MDI
	Amount	Times per day	
Inhaled Medication			
Rescue Pack Medication			
Other respiratory medication			

My Usual Symptoms day to day when stable (not during a chest infection), please tick or answer:

Cough

- I normally cough most days of the week
- I normally cough one or two days of the week
- I normally cough a few days per month
- I normally cough only with chest infections

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How much do you cough day to day?

- I normally cough up sputum most days of the week
- I normally cough up sputum one or two days of the week
- I normally cough up sputum a few days per month
- I normally cough up sputum only with chest infections

What colour is the sputum?

- clear
- white
- light yellow or green
- dark yellow or green
- brown

Daily Sputum Volume?

- 1 teaspoon
- 1 tablespoonful
- half a sputum pot
- 1 sputum pot

Is your sputum?

- watery
- sticky
- thick
- loose

Breathlessness

- I normally get breathless walking around the home
- I normally get breathless walking outside on the level
- I normally get breathless walking up a flight of stairs
- I normally get breathless playing sports
- I only get breathless with chest infections
- I never get breathless

Other usual symptoms e.g. wheezing, tiredness, fatigue

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Routine Call CRS

- If you feel your bronchiectasis is worse but no change in the amount or stickiness or colour of your sputum and no improvement within 48 hours, contact the Community Respiratory Service (CRS) for advice

Actions:

- We may ask you to take a sputum sample to your GP practice or the hospital to test whether there is an infection developing.

Urgent Call CRS or GP for assessment & treatment

- Has my sputum changed? (colour, amount, consistency), and/or is there some blood mixed in with my sputum?
- Have I generally had more symptoms (coughing, wheezing, breathlessness)
- Generally felt unwell for the last 24 hours

Actions:

- Call CRS for assessment. We will either visit you at home for an assessment first or advise you to start your rescue pack of antibiotics (if you have one)
- Do your airway clearance techniques more frequently.
- If using, take your reliever inhaler more often, up to: puffs, per day.
- Before starting any antibiotics you are given, do a sputum sample and drop it off at your GP surgery, or the hospital. Do not wait for the results before starting the antibiotics.
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Eat plenty and often

Emergency CALL 999

- You are confused or drowsy OR
- Coughing up large amounts of blood OR
- Severely breathlessness or breathless whilst talking OR
- Central chest pain

Actions:

- Call 999

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Sputum Samples

Before taking your first antibiotic, it is important that a sputum sample is sent off for testing. This is so that we can look at which bacteria are causing the infections, which helps us to understand which antibiotics are better suited to you, and also which antibiotics will not work.

If you do not have sputum pots and specimen forms at home, please let us know and we will arrange for you to have some at home.

When a sputum sample is needed, you must put a sample of your sputum (the coloured mucus, not spit), into one of the sputum pots. Make sure your name, date of birth and today's date are written on the pot. Then put it into the bag attached to the form and seal it. The date and time you have done the sample need to be entered onto the front of the form. The rest of the form should have already been completed by one of us.

The sample should be done in the morning, and then taken that same morning to your GP practice or straight to Sandwell or City Hospital. Please speak to one of us to find out where in the hospital it is you need to take it. It can take 3-5 days to get a result, and we will contact you once it is ready.

If you want to drop it at your GP practice, you will need to find out when the specimen collection times are at the GPs, so that you do not miss the collection time. This normally only happens once a day. Sputum samples should not sit overnight waiting to be collected. This can affect the results.

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Flare-up (exacerbation) record

In the table below record your flare-ups and the medication taken during them. This record will help the Community Respiratory Service monitor your condition.

Date	Antibiotics take	Oral steroids taken?	Inhalers Increased?

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Further information

British Lung Foundation

For information about living with your lung condition.

<https://www.blf.org.uk/>

(Website accessed 02 September 2021).

For more information about our hospitals and services please see our website www.swbh.nhs.uk, follow us on Twitter @SWBHnhs and like us on Facebook www.facebook.com/SWBHnhs.

Sources used in this booklet:

- 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 21 December 2021).
- British Thoracic Society (2012) Quality standards for clinically significant bronchiectasis in adults. *British Thoracic Society Reports*, Vol 4 (1). Available at: <https://www.brit-thoracic.org.uk/document-library/quality-standards/bronchiectasis/bts-bronchiectasis-quality-standards/> (Accessed 02 August 2021).

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