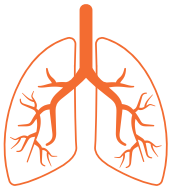
Basics of Bronchiectasis

WORLD BRONCHIECTASIS DAY
JULY 1ST



What is bronchiectasis?

Bronchiectasis is a chronic lung disease characterized by enlarged airways that are thickened and/or scarred. These changes can cause mucus to build up in the lungs. Excessive mucus build-up in the airways may lead to repeated infections causing more lung damage and worsening respiratory symptoms.

Annually observed on July 1st, World Bronchiectasis Day aims to raise global awareness, share knowledge, and discuss ways to reduce the burden of bronchiectasis for patients worldwide.

What are the symptoms of bronchiectasis?

Symptoms vary greatly between people: most have a long-term cough, producing sputum, but some might have a dry cough with little or no sputum. Other symptoms include repeated breathlessness, repeat lung infections, fatigue, unexplained fever, chills, weight loss, and chest pain.

How is bronchiectasis diagnosed?

Bronchiectasis is typically diagnosed by a high resolution computed tomography (CT) scan of the lungs – a form of x-ray that gives a very detailed picture of your lungs. The image will show the location of the airway abnormalities within the lung, as well as the extent of lung damage.

What are the treatments?

There are two key parts to proper treatment. First, it is important to remove retained mucus from the airways (airway clearance), which may include: manual airway clearance techniques, use of airway clearance devices, medicines, aerobic exercise, and drinking plenty of water.

Second, preventing and treating infections when present. This process involves collecting a sputum sample to find bacteria, fungi (mold) or mycobacteria that are present in the airways. Once the type of infection is identified, it is treated with the appropriate antibiotics.

Is there a cure?

There currently is no cure for bronchiectasis, but it can be treated effectively. Watch for early warning signs of a flare-up and work with a health care provider to find the best treatment plan. Research and clinical trials are taking place now to find better treatments for bronchiectasis.

Resources:

www.bronchiectasisandNTM360.org
www.thoracic.org/patients
www.lungfoundation.com/au
www.NTMinfo.org
www.bronchiectasis.eu
www.jrs.or.jp/modules/english
www.europeanlung.org/en
www.lung.org
www.lovexair.com
www.gaapp.org
www.icsorg.net
www.pulmonology.co.za
www.aarc.org
www.uscopdcoalition.org
www.chestnet.org
www.runningonair.net

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