

Treatment of Bronchiectasis



What type of physician should I see to treat my bronchiectasis?

A diagnosis of bronchiectasis can be made by any of your providers including primary care, respiratory/pulmonary, or other providers. Once you have a confirmed bronchiectasis diagnosis by chest imaging (e.g., CT scan), additional evaluation may be needed. Therefore, referral to a specialist in respiratory medicine is recommended (if available) for long-term management of the condition.

What are the goals for the treatment of bronchiectasis?



Bronchiectasis is manageable with proper evaluation and attention. Goals for treating bronchiectasis include reducing symptom burden, preventing exacerbations (a.k.a. repeated infections or flare-ups), improving or maintaining quality of life, and maintaining lung function.

What are some common treatments for bronchiectasis?



Airway clearance: Keeping the airways clear of mucus is an essential component of treatment. Removing mucus accumulated in the airways will help prevent recurrent infections and further worsening of bronchiectasis. There are many ways to help remove mucus from your lungs; *not every person responds the same way*. Your health care team will suggest airway clearance devices and techniques that may be helpful.

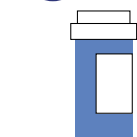
Although there is no cure for bronchiectasis, there are effective treatments that can help you feel better.



Medications: Your health care provider may prescribe you medications to assist with opening the airways, removing mucus, and treating infections. Sometimes these medications may be taken by mouth and other times they can be inhaled into your lungs. If the recommended medication is to be inhaled, you may need a nebulizer to turn the medication into a light mist for you to breathe it in.



Oxygen: Some patients with bronchiectasis may require supplemental oxygen if the level of oxygen in their blood is low. Your physician will recommend how much and when you should use oxygen based on tests and evaluations.



Antibiotics: Antibiotics may be required to treat infections, and these may be given by mouth or intravenously (IV). IV antibiotics are often used for more severe infections that are not treated effectively with oral medicines. Additionally, a maintenance program may include inhaled antibiotics.



Lung Surgery: On occasion, lung surgery (called lung resection) may be an effective form of treatment when there is only one area of the lung that is affected by bronchiectasis. Lung surgery may help improve symptoms and lower the number of flare-ups.

What are other things that can be done for those with bronchiectasis to feel better?



- ✓ Eat nutritious foods
- ✓ Exercise daily
- ✓ Maintain a healthy weight
- ✓ Keep all recommended vaccines up-to-date
- ✓ Do not smoke or vape
- ✓ Keep all scheduled appointments with your health care team
- ✓ Take all medicines as prescribed

For more information on the treatment of bronchiectasis visit: www.WorldBronchiectasisDay.org

This document was reviewed by the World Bronchiectasis Day Global Planning Committee.

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