

## Asthma

Asthma is a chronic disease that affects your airways. Your airways are tubes that carry air in and out of your lungs. If you have asthma, the inside walls of your airways become sore and **swollen**. That makes them very sensitive, and they may react strongly to things that you are allergic to or find **irritating**. When your airways react, they get narrower and your lungs get less air. This can cause **wheezing**, coughing, chest tightness and trouble breathing, especially early in the morning or at night.

When your asthma symptoms become worse than usual, it's called an asthma attack. In a severe asthma attack, the airways can close so much that your vital organs do not get enough oxygen. People can die from severe asthma attacks.

Asthma is treated with two kinds of medicines: quick-**relief** medicines to stop asthma symptoms and long-term control medicines to prevent symptoms.

## Bronchitis

Bronchitis is an inflammation of the main air passages (bronchi) to your lungs. It causes a cough, **shortness** of breath and chest **tightness**. Coughing often brings up yellow or greenish **mucus**. There are two main types of bronchitis: acute and chronic.

Acute bronchitis is often caused by the same viruses that cause colds. It usually starts as a sore throat, **runny** nose or sinus infection, then spreads to your airways. It can cause a lingering dry **cough**, but it usually goes away on its own.

Chronic bronchitis is one type of COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease). The inflamed **bronchi** produce a lot of mucus. This leads to cough and difficulty getting air in and out of the lungs. Cigarette smoking is the most common cause. Breathing in other **fumes** and dusts over a long period of time may also cause chronic bronchitis. Treatment will help your symptoms, but chronic bronchitis is a long-term condition that keeps coming back or never goes away completely.

## Emphysema

Emphysema is a type of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) involving damage to the air **sacs** (alveoli) in the lungs. As a result, your body does not get the oxygen it needs. Emphysema makes it hard to **catch** your breath. You may also have a chronic cough and have trouble breathing during exercise.

The most common cause is cigarette smoking. If you smoke, quitting can help prevent you from getting the disease. If you already have emphysema, not smoking might keep it from getting worse. Treatment is based on whether your symptoms are mild, moderate or severe. Treatments include inhalers, oxygen, medications and sometimes **surgery** to relieve symptoms and prevent complications.

## Lung Cancer

Also called: Bronchogenic carcinoma

Lung cancer is one of the most common cancers in the world. It is a leading cause of cancer death in men and women in the United States. Cigarette smoking causes most lung cancers. The more cigarettes you smoke per day and the earlier you started smoking, the greater your risk of lung cancer. High levels of **pollution**, radiation and asbestos exposure may also increase risk.

Common symptoms of lung cancer include

- A cough that doesn't go away and gets worse over time
- Constant **chest** pain
- Coughing **up** blood
- Shortness of breath, wheezing, or **hoarseness**
- Repeated problems with pneumonia or bronchitis
- Swelling of the neck and face
- Loss of **appetite** or weight loss
- Fatigue

There are many types of lung cancer. Each type of lung cancer grows and spreads in different ways and is treated differently. Treatment also depends on the stage, or how advanced it is. Treatment may include chemotherapy, radiation and surgery.

## Whooping Cough

Also called: Pertussis

Whooping cough is an infectious bacterial disease that causes uncontrollable coughing. The name comes from the noise you make when you take a breath after you cough. You may have **choking** spells or may cough so hard that you **vomit**.

Anyone can get whooping cough, but it is more common in infants and children. It's especially dangerous in infants. The coughing spells can be so bad that it is hard for infants to eat, drink or breathe.

Before there was a vaccine, whooping cough was one of the most common childhood **diseases** and a major cause of childhood deaths in the U.S. There are fewer cases today because there are both pertussis-only vaccines and combination vaccines for tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis. If you have whooping cough, **treatment** with antibiotics may help if given early.

## Sinusitis

Sinusitis means your sinuses are infected or **inflamed**. Your sinuses are hollow air spaces within the bones surrounding the nose. They produce **mucus**, which drains into the nose. If your nose is swollen, this can block the sinuses and cause pain and infection.

Sinusitis can be acute, lasting for less than four weeks, or chronic, lasting much longer. Acute sinusitis often starts as a cold, which then turns into a bacterial infection. Allergies, pollutants, **nasal** problems and certain diseases can also cause sinusitis.

Symptoms of sinusitis can include fever, weakness, **fatigue**, cough and congestion. There may also be mucus drainage in the back of the throat, called postnasal drip. Treatments include antibiotics, decongestants and pain relievers. Using heat pads on the inflamed area, saline nasal sprays and vaporizers can also help.