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## Children's Services – Parent Information

# Bronchiectasis

### What is Bronchiectasis?

Bronchiectasis is abnormal damage and dilation (widening) of the large airways. A person may be born with it (congenital bronchiectasis) or may acquire it later in life as a result of another disorder such as cystic fibrosis or recurrent infections. The bronchi are the tubes that transport air to the lung tissue (alveoli). They produce mucus which keeps the tubes moist and prevents bacteria settling. The mucus is normally brushed away by tiny hairs (cilia) that line the walls of the bronchi. In some people, the airways become damaged and the naturally produced mucus is not removed as efficiently. Subsequently this mucus becomes chronically infected, resulting in airway inflammation and further airway damage.

### What causes it?

In over half the cases in the UK the cause is unknown. Other causes are:

- Genetic disorders such as Cystic Fibrosis or Primary Ciliary Dyskinesia.
- Inhaled foreign object, for example, a peanut
- Gastro oesophageal reflux
- Immunodeficiency

If an associated condition is identified it may be necessary to treat this in addition to the bronchiectasis.

### Signs and symptoms

These vary in degree and severity between individuals. Not all symptoms apply to every child.

- Persistent productive cough
- Wheeze
- Shortness of breath especially on exercise
- Weight loss or poor weight gain
- Finger/toe clubbing. Clubbing is an increase in the soft tissue of the end of the fingers or toes.
- Recurrent chest infections

## How is it diagnosed?

There are several methods of diagnosing bronchiectasis:

- Chest x-ray
- Chest scan CT
- Lung function tests

In addition, other investigations may support the diagnosis:

- Sputum cultures – sputum is taken to the laboratory where it is placed in a medium under conditions that allow the organisms to grow.
- Blood tests

## Treatment

Treatment will depend on the severity of the condition. It is a long term condition. The existing damage to the airways can not be reversed but with treatment further damage may be prevented:

- Antibiotics (oral or intravenous) may be used to treat chest infections
- You may be taught how to perform chest physiotherapy to help clear secretions and mucus from the airway by a physiotherapist



We are currently working towards a smoke free site. Smoking is only permitted in the designated smoking areas.

For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169

### Help with this leaflet:



If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio format, please ask the department to contact Patient Information: 01223 216032 or [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

### Polish

Jeżeli chciałbyś uzyskać te informacje w innym języku, w dużej czcionce lub w formacie audio, poproś pracownika oddziału o kontakt z biurem Informacji Pacjenta (Patient Information) pod numerem telefonu: 01223 216032 lub pod adresem [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

### Portuguese

Se precisar desta informação noutra língua, em impressão de letras grandes ou formato áudio, por favor peça ao departamento que contacte a secção de Informação aos Doentes (Patient Information) pelo telefone 01223 216032 ou através do e-mail [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

### Arabic

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### Cantonese

如您需以另一語言版本、特大字體或錄音形式索取本資料，請要求部門聯絡病人諮詢服務：電話 01223 216032，電郵地址 [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

### Turkish

Eğer bu bilgileri başka bir dilde veya büyük baskılı veya sesli olarak isterseniz, lütfen bulunduğunuz bölümdeki görevlilere söyleyin Hasta Bilgilendirme servisini arasinlar: 01223 216032 veya [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

### Urdu

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی دیگر زبان میں، بڑے الفاظ میں یا آڈیو طریقہ سے درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی اس شعبہ سے پیشینٹ انفارمیشن سے ذیل کے ذریعہ رابطہ کرنے کی درخواست کریں: 01223 216032 یا [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

### Bengali

আপনি যদি এই তথ্য অন্য কোন ভাষায়, বড় অক্ষরে বা অডিও রেকর্ডিং পেতে চান তাহলে 'প্যাশেন্ট ইনফরমেশান' এর সঙ্গে 01223 216032 নম্বরে ফোন করে বা [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk) ঠিকানায় ই-মেইল করে যোগাযোগ করার জন্য ডিপার্টমেন্টটিতে অনুরোধ জানান।

### Document history

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