

Fast Facts

Cough

- Body's response to something that is irritating the throat or airway
 - Helps to clear throat or airway (protects you)
- Force needed to remove an irritant is significant, which is why having an extended, forceful cough is so tiring and can lead to a variety of side effects, such as headaches, chest discomfort, sleeplessness, urinary incontinence, and broken ribs
 - Lasts less than three weeks = Acute
 - Lasts longer than eight weeks for adults or four weeks for children = Chronic

<i>Causes</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Prevention</i>
<u>Acute:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Common cold -Flu -Pneumonia -Whooping cough -Inhaling an irritant, like a chemical <u>Chronic:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Allergies -Bronchitis -Postnasal drip -Gastroesophageal reflux (GERD) -Asthma (more common in children) <u>Other Causes (Adult):</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sinus infection -Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) -Emphysema -Laryngitis -Tuberculosis -Heart failure -Lung cancer -Neuromuscular disorders that affect the airway -Certain medications (angiotensin-converting enzyme—ACE—inhibitors) -Bronchiectasis (a condition that causes abnormal widening of the bronchial tubes making it difficult to clear mucus from them) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Depends on the cause <u>Home Remedies:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Over-the-counter medicine (suppressants or expectorants)—always follow dosing instructions and don't give to children under the age of 4 without checking with their doctor -Sucking on cough drops or hard candies (don't give them to children under 6 years old due to the possibility of choking) -Swallowing a teaspoon of honey (don't give it to children under the age of 1 because their digestive system can't process it) -Adding moisture to the air by using a vaporizer or taking a steamy shower -Drink warm liquids -Avoid smoking or being around people who smoke <u>See a Doctor:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Been coughing for several weeks without any improvement -Coughing up thick, green/yellow-colored mucus -Wheezing -Shortness of breath -Temperature above 100°F <u>Call 911:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Choking 	<u>General Steps:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Wash hands thoroughly and appropriately -Get vaccinated for flu, pneumonia, and whooping cough -Stay away from small children that can't get the vaccine if you're sick or have been around others who are sick -Don't smoke or spend time around smokers

<u>Other Causes (Children):</u> -Bronchiolitis -Croup -Choking -Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)	-Difficulty breathing or swallowing -Coughing up bloody/pink-tinged mucus	
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