

REFRACTORY CHRONIC COUGH

THE BASICS



**GLOBAL ALLERGY
& AIRWAYS**
PATIENT PLATFORM

What is Chronic Cough?

A chronic cough:

- is a persistent cough that happens most days of the week.
- lasts four weeks or longer in children and eight weeks or longer in adults.

A cough is a good reflex, because it protects your lungs from irritants, but it should not be ongoing or constant.

A refractory chronic cough (RCC) is when your doctor can't find the cause, even after an in-depth exam and treatment. It continues despite treatment.

What Causes Chronic Cough?

A chronic cough can be:

- chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- asthma
- respiratory infections
- postnasal drip
- acid reflux
- heart failure
- ACE inhibitors (medications given for conditions including high blood pressure and heart failure)
- tobacco or vape smoke
- air pollution
- other airway irritants

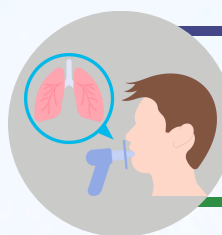
Less common causes include cancer, pneumonia, and rare lung conditions.

How is Chronic Cough Diagnosed?



Your doctor will examine you and ask about your medical history. They will check your temperature, oxygen level, lungs, heart, and ears. They may look at the back of your throat for postnasal drip (mucus drips down the back of your throat making you need to swallow a lot), swab your throat, or collect a sample of your phlegm (mucus).

If your doctor thinks allergies may be the cause, they can order a blood test to check for allergies or do an allergy skin prick test on your arm or back.



If the doctor needs more information, they may order an x-ray, CT scan of your lungs, or use a thin scope to check your nose or lungs. They might also request a spirometry test to check your lung capacity or order a methacholine challenge. The methacholine challenge helps doctors see whether asthma may be an underlying cause of the chronic cough.

It may take a small team of specialists to treat your lungs, allergies, speech, throat, and digestive system.



What's Next if I Think I Have Chronic Cough?

If it's been less than eight weeks, your cough might be from an illness and should go away as your body starts to heal.

Call your doctor if you are an adult with a cough lasting longer than eight weeks (four weeks for a child). Your doctor can try to figure out what is causing your persistent cough and how to treat it.

Since each person's body is different, the doctor will need to find the best treatment plan for you.



Where Can I Find More Information?

- To learn more about chronic cough, visit [Global Allergy & Airways Patient Platform](#)
- You can also visit Pause your Cough <https://pauseyourcough.com/>