

# Coughing and Heart Diseases

**C**oughing is basically an instinctive reflex action or a defense mechanism that our body employs for expelling the foreign substances that may be irritating the airways. When the sensory receptors in the windpipe and the airways detect irritants or any foreign particles, the diaphragm and the muscles located within the ribs contract. This is followed by inhalation of air. When the inhaled air moves into the lungs, the epiglottis (the cartilage flap that covers the windpipe) and the larynx close so as to trap the inhaled air within the [lungs](#).



## The Abdominal Muscles and the Innermost Intercostal Muscles Contract

As a result, pressure in the lungs increase. The vocal cords relax and the larynx opens. This is followed by the expulsion of air from the lungs at a high velocity. The air that is forced out clears the foreign particles or irritants from the airways. Though coughing is not really a disease in itself, chronic **cough** is often a sign of respiratory tract infections. There may be a connection between cough and heart diseases. Let's find out if there is a cause-and-effect relationship between the two.

## Diagnosis and Treatment

Using a stethoscope, the breathing pattern of an individual is observed. If abnormal sounds occur while breathing, a doctor may suggest a chest x-ray and lung function tests to provide a deeper analysis. Sputum sample analysis is used to detect infection signs and confirm if the bronchitis is viral or bacterial in nature. If the infecting agent is bacteria, then antibiotics are prescribed. To help ease bronchitis symptoms, doctors can advise the use of cough suppressants and medications for nose congestion and mucus.

## Difference Between Bacterial and Viral Bronchitis

As mentioned above, virus is the most common cause of bronchitis. The symptoms of viral bronchitis include fever, cough, chest pain, difficulty in breathing, etc. Similar symptoms are observed in case of bacterial bronchitis. But, note that, when suffering from bacterial infection, you will experience high fever and severe mucus-producing cough. As the symptoms of bacterial and viral bronchitis are more or less similar, only a doctor can differentiate between the two. Bacterial bronchitis can be severe, and is treated with antibiotics.

## Acute Bronchitis is a Very Common Health Problem of the Winters

Mainly, it is caused by viral infection, but certain kind of bacterial infection can also lead to this condition. It is found that the disease develops after the infections of influenza or common cold. Other possible causal factors are smoke, dust, and harmful chemicals. These substances have suspended particles that are capable of causing irritation to the bronchial tubes and cause inflammation. Sometimes, the disease may occur after accidental inhalation of food or vomit. It may lead to asthma in severe cases.

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**Chronic Bronchitis Effects** Lungs are the respiratory organs of the human body. They contain tube like structures called the bronchial tubes or airways through which the air passes. When the airways are exposed to tobacco, dust, or other chemical substances for a long period...

## Symptoms

The symptoms are usually observed 2-3 days after the actual infection of the respiratory passage has happened, and some of the symptoms may continue to last for 2-3 weeks. Following are the main symptoms that will help you identify the problem.

## Ginseng

Ginseng contains active chemical components called ginsenosides, which helps to decrease the swelling and inflammation of the lungs by clearing the bronchial air ways. People with acute heart ailment or high blood pressure are also not recommended use of this herb.

- Weakening of the myocardium (heart muscle) due to coronary artery disease is one of the most common causes of congestive heart failure.
- Coronary heart disease is characterized by limited flow of blood to the heart due to the accumulation of arterial plaque.
- This causes the heart muscle to weaken, thereby increasing the risk of congestive heart failure.
- Thickening of the heart muscle due to high blood pressure can also cause the same effect.
- Coronary artery disease also increases the risk of a heart attack.
- A heart attack is a life-threatening condition wherein the blockage of a coronary artery causes damage to a part of the heart muscle.
- Shortness of breath, persistent cough, chest pain, wheezing and edema are the characteristic symptoms of congestive heart failure.

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