

# Cough

Coughing is a reflex that keeps your throat and airways clear. Although it can be annoying, coughing helps your body heal or protect itself. Coughs can be either acute or chronic. Acute coughs begin suddenly and usually last no more than 2 to 3 weeks. Acute coughs are the kind you most often get with a cold. Chronic coughs last longer than 2 to 3 weeks. Coughing is not a disease in itself; rather it is a symptom of other disorders. It is a common problem and worth finding out the reason why you are coughing.

Chronic cough can be a symptom of:

- Acid Reflux
- A Lung Tumor
- Asthma
- Nasal drip
- Allergies
- Ace Inhibitors and beta blockers (blood pressure medicine)
- Smoking
- Sinus infection
- Pneumonia

The treatment of a chronic cough will also be directed at treating the underlying condition. It is important to recognize that treatment may be difficult, may employ multiple approaches, and may not completely eliminate the cough.

It is still vitally important for you to seek medical care for diagnosis and treatment of your cough, especially if your cough lasts longer than a week or 10 days.

To ease your cough, you can suck cough drops or hard candies. Do not give them to a child under age 5 because they can cause choking. You can increase the moisture in the air of your home by using a vaporizer or take a hot shower. Drink lots of fluids! Liquid helps thin the mucus in your throat. Warm liquids, such as broth or tea, can soothe your throat.