



Let's follow **Maria, Bill, and Janet** as they each attempt to uncover the cause of their chronic cough.

Chronic Cough Diagnosis Roadmap



Each patient's journey with chronic cough is unique. This roadmap illustrates what a patient may encounter on their path to possible diagnosis. While patients may experience a combination of what **Maria, Bill, and Janet** experience, it is likely they may have other stops along the way as well.

01 Meet Maria, Bill, & Janet

Maria, Bill, and Janet all have a chronic cough that has lasted over 8 weeks. All 3 start their journey by getting help from providers. **Maria** and **Janet** turn to their primary care providers (PCPs), who help coordinate their care. **Bill** does not have a PCP and goes to his local clinic. All their providers order chest x-rays and bloodwork before referring them to specialists.



02 Specialist Visits

Maria sees a pulmonologist where she gets a spirometry test for asthma, but the results are inconclusive. **Bill** takes ACE inhibitors for diabetes. His cardiologist suggests switching medications to help his cough but refers **Bill** to an endocrinologist first. **Janet** sees a gastroenterologist to check if her cough could be related to her indigestion. **Janet's** gastroenterologist performs some tests and uses a scope to look at her esophagus.



04

Prescriptions & OTC Medications

Maria visits an allergist who suggests she try allergy medicine for a few weeks. **Bill's** lung tests are inconclusive and he is prescribed an inhaler. He also makes lifestyle changes like walking 2 miles a day. **Janet's** doctors find damage to her esophagus and she starts treatment for GERD that includes proton-pump inhibitor medication and avoiding certain foods.



03 More Specialized Testing

Maria goes to an ear, nose, and throat specialist where she has a CT scan of her sinuses and a sputum culture. She is prescribed an inhaler, but it doesn't help. **Bill** visits his endocrinologist who recommends against changing his medication. He also sees a pulmonologist for a series of lung function tests. **Janet's** test results show signs of gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), but she needs more testing to confirm.



06 Symptom Relief



Maria

Maria's doctors rule out emphysema, asthma, and bronchitis and think her cough could be due to post nasal drip. Her cough never goes away but is significantly lessened with allergy medication. She continues regular follow-up visits with her doctors.



Bill

Bill is also still coughing, despite his inhaler. He manages both his cough and diabetes with the help of his new PCP.



Janet

Janet's GERD was causing her chronic cough. As Janet's esophagus heals, her cough goes away. Although no longer coughing, Janet does have to continue taking medications and getting check-ups for her GERD.

05

Follow Up Visits

Maria sees her allergist every 6 weeks and PCP twice a year. **Bill** continues to see his endocrinologist and pulmonologist; he also finds a PCP to help him manage his multiple, ongoing chronic conditions. He has specialized immunology bloodwork, but it is inconclusive. **Janet** meets with her gastroenterologist to create a care plan to manage her GERD.



A differential diagnosis is a list of possible conditions or diseases that could be causing symptoms. It is not a definitive diagnosis. While many patients can lessen their symptoms, a differential diagnosis is a common outcome for patients with chronic cough.

