



Understanding Your Lung Health: Chronic Cough

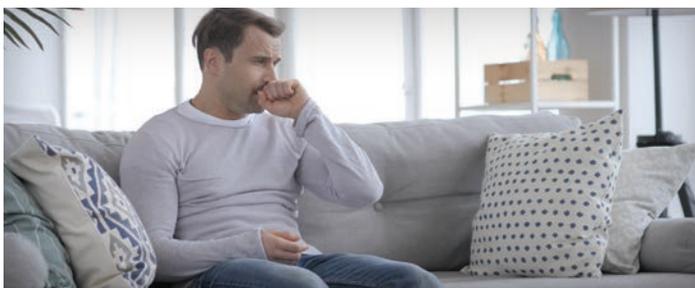
Although cough is a common symptom of many lung diseases, chronic cough can't always be linked to a specific disease or condition and often doesn't respond to treatment. If you have chronic cough it can feel like a burden on your daily life, with lack of sleep, mental and physical exhaustion or social stigma also impacting your quality of life.

What Causes Chronic Cough?

Some common causes of chronic cough include:

- Lung diseases such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), asthma or pulmonary fibrosis.
- Allergies, sinus problems and digestive issues (such as gastroesophageal reflux or GERD)
- Medications
- Smoking

When the cause of the cough has been identified, it can be successfully treated. But sometimes a chronic cough persists, either because treating the underlying cause is not effective or because your healthcare provider is unable to discover what is causing your continued coughing.



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Chronic Cough Symptoms

By definition, a cough is chronic if it lasts eight weeks or longer. In this case it is unlikely that the cough is caused by a respiratory infection and therefore will not go away with antibiotics. What is most frustrating for patients is that a chronic cough can become annoying, frustrating and at times embarrassing. It can also impact your day-to-day quality of life.

Questions To Ask Your Doctor

A good working relationship with a doctor who understands your symptoms will help you find solutions to living with chronic cough. Here are some questions you can ask to clarify your condition:

- How do we know if I have chronic cough?
- What tests have been done to rule out diseases that could be causing my chronic cough?
- Are there any prescription medications I am on that could be contributing to my cough?
- What can I do to help manage my cough?

Do you have chronic cough symptoms?

Take our quiz to understand if you have a chronic cough, and what next steps to take in your search for the root cause of your cough at [Lung.org/chronic-cough](https://www.lung.org/chronic-cough).

In addition, our Lung HelpLine is staffed by registered respiratory therapists that can help answer your lung health questions for free at **1-800-LUNGUSA**.