BRONCHITIS

Bronchitis occurs when the lining of your bronchial tract (the air tube that brings air to your lungs) becomes infected. An infection occurs when microorganisms, usually from the air you breathe or develop from a cold or flu, cling to the lining of your bronchial tract and begin to multiply. As these bacteria multiply in numbers they begin to cause a significant irritation to the lining of your bronchial tract. These tubes become swollen, and begin producing mucus (phlegm) to fight the irritation this causes. Unfortunately, this mucus also causes difficulty breathing, wheezing and a nasty cough. The infection itself will give you flu like symptoms.

Causes:

- **allergy**
- **infections**
- **cough and cold**
- **change in atmosphere**
- **smoking is most common cause**
- **dusty air or fog**
- **pollution**
- **virus**

Symptoms:

- **chest pain or tightening of chest**
- **complications in breathing**
- **coughing with mucous – green or yellow**
- **dry or wet cough**
- **Fever**
- **Muscle ache**
- **chronic bronchitis is defined as a cough that persists for 2-3 months each year for at least 2 years**
- **May have low blood oxygen**
- **Nasal congestion**
- **lasts from several days to 2-3 weeks**
- **Tiredness**

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If you are wondering if you have pneumonia instead of bronchitis – pneumonia is more severe and may need hospitalization. Symptoms are fever, chills, fatigue, lethargic, and the person feels very ill. Using stethescope, you can hear scattered crackles, excess phlegm in the airways.

REMEDIES TO HELP BRONCHITIS

- **Add 1 tsp honey to tea or hot water.**
- **Add ½ tsp honey with pinch black pepper, fresh ginger paste and 1-2 clove powder. Consume this paste to ward off burning sensation**

- **To reduce throat inflammation and congestion, add a few drops of lemon in warm water. Add 1 tsp honey to it and drink it, after stirring well.**

- **Slice onion in a plate or bowl and cover it with honey. Leave it overnight. Now, remove onion slices and take 1 tsp of honey four times a day to get instant relief.**

- **Few drops of oregano oil on back of tongue once a day to help severe cough**

- **Salt Water cuts through mucous which irritates the sensitive bronchial membranes. It also soothes the irritated throat. Add some salt in warm water, stir well, then gargle with this warm salt water 3-4 times a day.**

- **Ginger helps inflammation, sore and inflamed bronchial tubes. 1 tsp each of pepper, ginger powder and cloves. Add a little amount of this mixture in milk or honey, take 3 times a day.**

- **Prepare a powder of ground ginger, cloves, and cinnamon. Add half teaspoon of this mixture in a glass of hot water. Drink the mixture after stirring it well. To get relief try this remedy for a few days.**

- **For instant relief you can prepare herbal tea: 1 tsp each black pepper, ginger powder in a cup of boiling water. Steep a few minutes, add some honey, stir and drink twice a day.**

- **Orange juice builds immune system, helps keep pH alkaline, soothes inflamed throat Orange juice can be used with almonds to help sore throat. Finely crush half tsp fresh almonds, add it in orange juice. Drink this at night.**

- **Turmeric for cough relief, inflammation, excess mucus. Add 1 tsp turmeric powder in a glass of milk. Stir well and boil for a little while. Drink the hot mixture 2-3 times a day. Best on empty stomach away from meals. Do not this this remedy if you have stomach ulcers, gallstones, obstructive jaundice, hyperacidity.**

- **Garlic can be used for acute bronchitis. It is antiviral, antibiotic. 3 fresh garlic cloves, peeled and chopped. Add to glass of milk. Boil milk for some time, drink it warm before going to sleep.**

- **Eucalyptus oil has antibacterial properties heal burning sensation and inflamed throat. Use in steam therapy to soften mucus. Add a few drops in boiling water. Then cover your head with a towel and breathe in the steam. You can also use tea tree oil or pine oil in place of eucalyptus oil.**

- **Alternatively, eucalyptus oil can be applied on the chest directly to help the functioning of respiratory system and drive out excess mucus.**

- **Epsom salt helps get relief in the symptoms of bronchitis, especially acute bronchitis, Epsom salt bath is very effective. Add 1½ kg of Epsom salt in warm bath water. Immerse yourself for half an hour in the water just before going to bed every night, if you are suffering from acute bronchitis. If you are experiencing chronic bronchitis, do it two times a day.**

- **Onion has antibacterial and antiviral properties of onion which soothes inflammation and soreness of throat. Intake one teaspoon of raw onion juice on an empty stomach every morning. You can also have raw onion in salad or use onion while cooking.**

- **Sesame seeds possess medicinal properties that effectively treat bronchitis. It relieves chest pain. Mix one teaspoon each of linseed, sesame seeds and honey. Add a little quantity of common salt. Combine this mixture properly and consume it daily before sleeping. Sesame seeds can also be used with plain water. Mix half teaspoon of dry sesame seeds powder in two tablespoons of water and consume it daily.**

- **Potato Poultice: Cook whole potato with skin on. Mash. Mix with lard, wrap in a tea towel. Apply as hot as possible. If needed use hot water bottle. Apply for 1-2 hr.**

- **Lemon. Since lemon is rich in citrus properties, it helps one get rid of bronchitis. Boil a cup of water and grate a teaspoon of lemon rind in it. Steep it for a few minutes. You can also boil a lemon wedge. Strain the water into a cup and drink it. To treat sore throat, add one teaspoon of lemon juice in a cup of warm water. Stir it well and gargle with it.**

- **Water. It is very necessary to keep your body hydrated when you suffer from bronchitis. It is recommended to have at least 10 glasses of water daily. You can also have vegetable and fruit juices. Alternatively, add a little quantity of honey and a few drops of lemon in a glass of water. Stir this mixture well and drink it early morning.**
  Note- Avoid drinking alcohol or caffeine which leads to loss of fluids and makes the mucus tougher to be extracted.

- **Hot Toddy. One of the natural remedies to get rid of bronchitis is hot toddy. To prepare hot toddy, boil some water. Place a tea bag in it. Let it steep for 5-10 minutes. Add a pinch of cinnamon powder, honey, and alcohol to it. Stir the mixture well and drink it to soothe your burning throat.**

- **Mustard. There are several spices which help cure bronchitis. Add dry mustard and flour in a ratio of 1:4. Stir it well adding sufficient water to make a runny paste. Apply some olive oil on chest. Now, spread mustard mix on a clean muslin or washcloth. Apply it on chest. Ensure that the paste is not too hot; otherwise, it may burn your skin. Place it until it gets cool. Keep a check, if the plaster causes discomfort.**

- **Spinach. Spinach is also one of the effective remedies for this ailment. Add small amount of spinach (fresh) in a glass of water. Add ½ tablespoon honey to it and drink it.**
- **Bay Leaf. Bay leaf is one the simplest herbal cures for bronchitis. It can be taken as tea. To prepare tea, heat a cup of water till it starts boiling. Take a fresh bay leaf and put it in boiling water. Let it steep for a few minutes. Another option is to soak bay leaves in hot water. Apply it as poultice on chest. Cover the chest with a towel. Rewarm it whenever it cools down.**

- **Thyme. To get rid of mucus and strengthen the lungs, thyme is one of the best herbs**

with antibacterial properties. It can be used as seasoning. You can also prepare tea by adding half teaspoon thyme in a cup of boiling water. Steep it for 5 minutes. Add some honey to it for sweetening. Thyme oil can also be very effective, if used in diluted form. Dilute it by adding olive oil (the ratio of olive oil and thyme oil should be 2:1). Rub the mix on chest to treat congestion.

- **Savory. Savory is a peppery herb which is used to get rid of mucus. Get a cup of boiled water. Add half teaspoon of savory to it. Drink it every day to heal bronchitis.**
- **Holy Basil. Chew leaves of holy basil to keep lung infection at bay.**

- **Licorice root. Licorice rt. tea is a therapeutic remedy for inflamed throat. Add licorice roots in the boiling water. Steep it for a few minutes. Drink 1-2 cups daily. Its anti-inflammatory, antibacterial and antiviral properties reduce swelling resulted due to bronchitis.**

- **Essential Oils. Several essential oils like tea tree, lavender, anise, rosemary, peppermint, cypress and eucalyptus oils are wonderful home cure for bronchitis. Take 1 teaspoon carrier oil (jojoba, almond, etc.) and add 2-3 drops of Anise essential oil to it. Massage your throat and chest with this oil and put a warm towel on the affected area. A herbal chest rub can also be prepared by mixing 10 drops each of rosemary oil, thyme, peppermint and eucalyptus oil. Add ¼ cup of olive oil to it. Gently massage it on the chest and throat.**

- **Mullein. Steep dried mullein leaves in hot water for 10-15 minutes. Add honey as a sweetener. Drink at least 1 cup daily. Alternatively, boil the fresh mullein leaves in water for 5-8 minutes. Inhale the steam in order to get rid of congestion caused due to bronchitis.**

- **Plantain. Steep fresh plantain leaves in hot water for some time. Strain it and drink. You can breathe the steam in for a couple of minutes.**

Combination Remedies for Bronchitis:

1. **250 ml milk (8 oz)**
   1 Tbsp butter
   1 Tbsp honey
   ¼ tsp baking soda
   1 egg yolk
   Boil milk, let cool, add butter and honey and stir well. Add baking soda and egg yolk and stir well again. Take for 5 days before going to bed to get best results.

2. **To expel phlegm:**
   2 Tbsp olive oil
   2 Tbsp lemon juice
   2 Tbsp honey
   2 Tbsp water
   Mix all the ingredients and consume morning and evening.

Preventive Measures for Bronchitis:

- **Drink plenty of water.**
- **Avoid smoking and breathing in other smoke: campfire smoke, second hand smoke, marijuana smoke. In other words any kind of smoke.**

- **Avoid contact with scented candles, air fresheners, etc.**
- **Add moisture in air, use humidifiers.**
- **Take proper rest.**
- **Avoid air pollutants**

Rinse your hands and face frequently during “flu and cold” season.