

## Fast Facts

### Cough

- Body's response to something that is irritating throat or airway
- Helps to clear throat or airway (protects you)
- Force needed to remove an irritant is significant, which is why coughing can be so tiring
- Acute = < 3 weeks vs Chronic = > 8 weeks (adults) or > 4 weeks (children)

<i>Causes</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Prevention</i>
<p><u>Acute:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Common cold</li> <li>-Flu</li> <li>-Pneumonia</li> <li>-Whooping cough</li> <li>-Inhaling an irritant (like a chemical)</li> </ul> <p><u>Chronic:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Allergies</li> <li>-Bronchitis</li> <li>-Postnasal drip</li> <li>-Gastroesophageal reflux (GERD)</li> <li>-Asthma (more common in children)</li> </ul> <p><u>Other Causes (Adult):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Sinus infection</li> <li>-Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)</li> <li>-Emphysema</li> <li>-Laryngitis</li> <li>-Tuberculosis</li> <li>-Heart failure</li> <li>-Lung cancer</li> <li>-Neuromuscular disorders</li> <li>-Certain medications (ACE inhibitors)</li> <li>-Bronchiectasis (condition causing abnormal widening of bronchial tubes makes it difficult to clear mucus)</li> </ul> <p><u>Other Causes (Children):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Bronchiolitis</li> <li>-Croup</li> <li>-Choking</li> <li>-Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)</li> </ul>	<p>-Depends on cause</p> <p><u>Home Remedies:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Over-the-counter medicine (suppressants or expectorants)— always follow dosing instructions (don't give to children under 4 without checking with their doctor)</li> <li>-Suck on cough drops/hard candies (don't give them to children under 6 due to the possibility of choking)</li> <li>-Swallowing a teaspoon of honey (don't give it to children under 1 because their digestive system can't process it)</li> <li>-Adding moisture to the air by using a vaporizer or taking a steamy shower</li> <li>-Drink warm liquids</li> <li>-Avoid smoking or being around people who smoke</li> </ul> <p><u>See a Doctor:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Been coughing for several weeks without any improvement</li> <li>-Coughing up thick, green/yellow-colored mucus</li> <li>-Wheezing</li> <li>-Shortness of breath</li> <li>-Temperature above 100°F</li> </ul> <p><u>Call 911:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Choking</li> <li>-Difficulty breathing or swallowing</li> <li>-Coughing up bloody/pink-tinged mucus</li> </ul>	<p><u>General Steps:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Wash hands thoroughly and appropriately</li> <li>-Get vaccinated for flu, pneumonia and whooping cough</li> <li>-Stay away from small children that can't get vaccine if you're sick or have been around others who are sick</li> <li>-Don't smoke or spend time around smokers</li> </ul>

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