

VIBE ACTIVITIES

Healthy Body – Chest Infections page 26

HEALTHY VIBE Chest Infections

Early intervention is the key to avoiding bronchiectasis.

BRONCHIECTASIS (BRONG-KE-EK-TA-SIS) IS AN IRREVERSIBLE AND UNFORTUNATELY WIDESPREAD CONDITION THAT IS PREVALENT AMONG THE CENTRAL AUSTRALIAN INDIGENOUS POPULATION, WITH MANY OF THOSE AFFECTED BEING YOUNG CHILDREN.

People who have had severe or recurrent episodes of pneumonia or bronchiolitis are at the most risk of developing Bronchiectasis, a condition that is rare in developed countries but widespread in some Indigenous communities. The condition is characterised by a chronic wet cough, excessive mucus, breathlessness and fatigue. It's caused by an abnormal widening of the airways in the lungs where mucus pools, making the person prone to recurring respiratory infections.

Dr Kim Hare, senior research fellow at the Menzies School of Health Research, says the condition is affecting remote communities at a high rate, but it can be prevented.

"Bronchiectasis usually occurs in older people, but I would say it occurs in the Aboriginal population younger than anywhere else, and in fact, we've had some people diagnosed as young as five months of age, which is really terrible.

"They get repeated infections in the lungs and it becomes a persistent infection that causes damage to the bronchioles [the passageways that allow air to move from the nose or mouth to the lungs]," says Dr Hare. "At some stage that damage becomes irreversible. Bronchiectasis is defined as irreversible dilation of the airways."

Dr Hare says that infections can also spread more easily in small communities where homes may house large numbers of people.

"When you get a lot of kids crowded together, often going from house to house, they will pass infections around," she says.

"In some communities at times it can be seen as normal for kids to be coughing and to have a chronic wet cough for weeks or months at a time. The kids might be running around and otherwise be quite well, so people don't realise how serious it can be."

It's at the early stages of a chest infection that a child should be seen by a Doctor to work out whether they have a viral or bacterial infection and to treat it accordingly. This is the best defence against Bronchiectasis. If bronchiectasis does occur,

"It's difficult because you can get antibiotics to clear it up, but really when you get kids with persistent infections, they need to be treated aggressively to try and stop it from becoming something worse."

there are some promising developments with a new drug that is currently being used in the Northern Territory.

"We've recently conducted randomised controlled trials of children with Bronchiectasis receiving long-term treatment with a drug called azithromycin," says Dr Hare.

"It's good because you can give a weekly dose that is long acting, unlike amoxicillin [a common antibiotic] where you have to administer it twice a day for seven days. They have found that

azithromycin is effective in preventing respiratory exacerbation, as well as other infections.

For children most at risk for developing serious lung conditions, this is a great option."

While the new medication seems to be helping, the best approach to chest infections is to always consult a doctor once an infection has been hanging around for longer than one to two weeks. Other illnesses such as asthma need to be ruled out before any treatment can be administered.

Educating parents about the warning signs is also key to prevention.

"There are now 'talking posters' up in clinics in communities, which is really great, as people can push a button to hear what sounds they need to be looking out for, along with the persistent cough. Usually a lot will be going on before it gets to the stage of Bronchiectasis, so early diagnosis is the key to preventing what can become an irreversible condition," says Dr Hare.

Usually a lot will be going on before it gets to the stage of bronchiectasis, so early diagnosis is the key to preventing what can become an irreversible condition.



We often take our lungs for granted, but healthy lungs are necessary for life. With each breath the air travels down the trachea and tiny hairs (cilia) remove any dirt. Air then travels through the bronchi and the bronchioles. It's a complex process that produces a very simple, and powerful, result – life.

Bronchiectasis is an infectious disease of the lungs characterised by a persistent wet cough, breathlessness and fatigue. Once the lungs are badly damaged by Bronchiectasis, they can't be repaired.

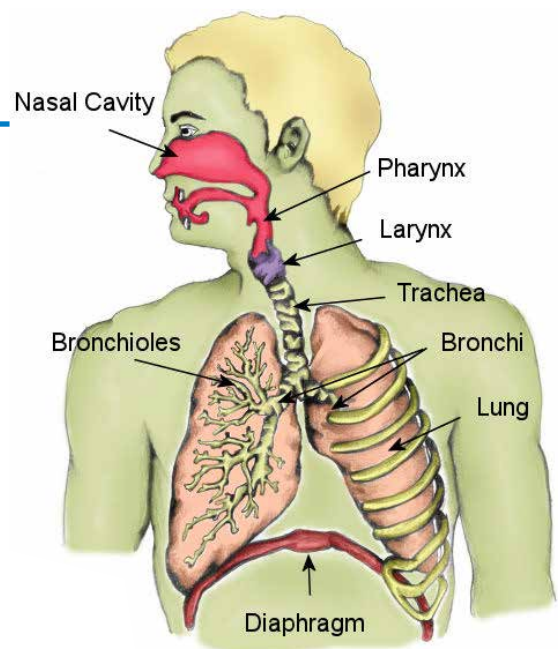
Always have a persistent cough checked by your doctor.

READ Healthy Body – *Chest Infections* on page 26

BUILDING READING SKILLS

You can build your reading skills by

- skimming and scanning for information.
- reading headings, text boxes and pictures.
- reading for meaning.
- making connections between the text and your world.



There are three levels of comprehension questions:

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| Literal | The answer is located in one sentence in the text. |
| Inferred | You need to make links between sentences and graphics (such as illustrations, maps and tables) and what you already know. |
| Applied | The answer is in your background knowledge, what you already know or feel. |

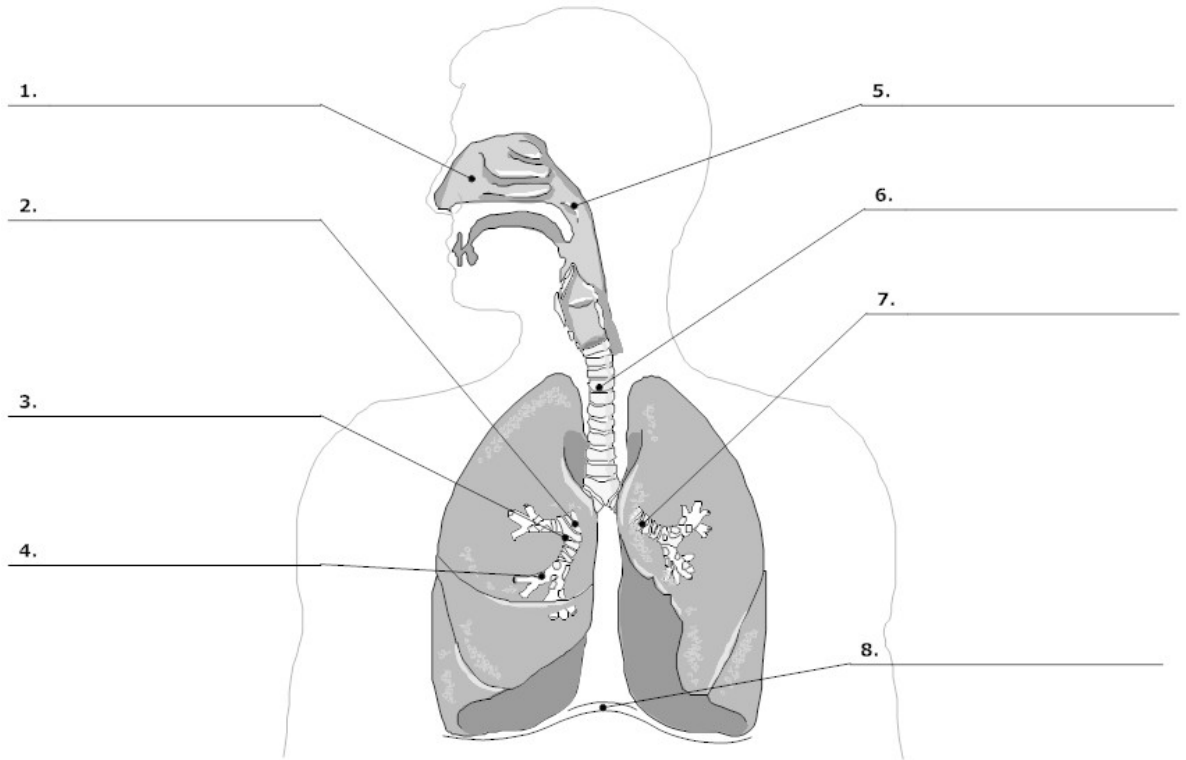
ACTIVITY 1

LABEL THE DIAGRAM



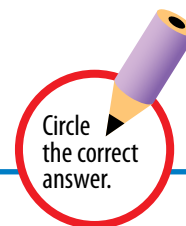
1 Label the diagram of the Respiratory System.

RESPIRATORY SYSTEM



ACTIVITY 2

TRUE OR FALSE?



1 Circle the correct answer. (inferred)

Bronchiectasis affects young and old people.	TRUE	FALSE
Bronchiectasis rarely occurs in Central Australia.	TRUE	FALSE
Some symptoms of Bronchiectasis include a persistent wet cough, mucus, breathlessness and fatigue.	TRUE	FALSE
Educating parents about the warning signs is one key to preventing Bronchiectasis.	TRUE	FALSE
The effects of Bronchiectasis can be reversed even if it is left untreated.	TRUE	FALSE

ACTIVITY 2

CLOZE PASSAGE



1 Fill in the gaps using words from the **Word Box** below.

Bronchiectasis is an infectious _____ disease caused by bacterial or viral _____ and inflammation. While it is now _____ found in developed countries, it remains _____ among Indigenous populations where respiratory disease affects infants, _____ and adults. Some _____ of Bronchiectasis include

- persistent wet _____
- continually tired or lacking _____
- breathlessness.

Always see your doctor if you have a persistent cough.

Word Box

rarely concentration cough symptoms
children common infection lung

2 Place the words from the **Word Box** in ABC order.

3 Short answer. Explain one easy way to prevent the spread of coughs and infections at home . (applied)



ACTIVITY 3

LANGUAGE CONVENTIONS – CONTRACTIONS

1 Write the words that each contraction stands for.
An example has been done for you.

(I'm) I am going to get better.

(He's) _____ had a cough for weeks.

He (didn't) _____ feel well.

(We're) _____ going to the doctor today.

(It's) _____ starting to get worse.

I (don't) _____ want to be unhealthy.

ACTIVITY 4

PUNCTUATION



1 Rewrite this sentence with the correct spelling and punctuation.

early diagnosis is the key to preventing what can become an irreversabel condishon
