

The pulmonologist will see your child on regular bases in the clinic. This is important so he/she can follow and prevent the progress of the disease.

#### In the clinic visit:

- You will be asked questions about your child's health, weight gain and respiratory symptoms.
- Sputum cultures or throat swabs will be taken to check on the bacterial growth in his/her lung secretions.
- If your child is 6 years old or older, he/she will be asked to do pulmonary function test.
- Your child's treatment including chest physiotherapy will be reviewed with you.

# Bronchiectasis



#### Pediatric Pulmonology



4439 4113



pediatrics@hamad.qa

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# Bronchiectasis

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## Q: What is bronchiectasis?

The air is transferred to the lungs through a series of branching tubes called bronchi. These bronchi contain glands which secrete small amounts of mucus. This helps to keep the airways moist and holds dust and germs that you breathe in. Trapped germs and dust is moved out of the lung by small hair like projections called cilia until it reaches the wind pipe and coughed out.

When these bronchi are damaged, mucus accumulates in large quantities and becomes a good environment for the bacteria to grow and multiply, leading to frequent chest infections that damage the bronchi further and make it wider.

## Q: What causes bronchiectasis?

1. Inherited diseases, such as cystic fibrosis, primary ciliary dyskinesia
2. Severe lung infection
3. Defect in immunity
4. Blockage of bronchus with a neglected foreign body
5. Unknown



## Symptoms of bronchiectasis

The most common symptoms are cough and the production of large amounts of phlegm, frequent chest infections, coughing blood, chest pain and difficulty in growth.

## Q: How to diagnose bronchiectasis?

When your child's doctor suspects bronchiectasis because he/she has the previous symptoms, your doctor will ask for a chest CT scan (chest image) to confirm the bronchiectasis. Your doctor will also ask for further workup to diagnose the cause of the bronchiectasis for example a sweat chloride test to rule out cystic fibrosis, flexible bronchoscopy to check for airway anomalies or foreign body and sputum cultures.

## Treatment of bronchiectasis

1. Hydration: maintain body hydration by drinking plenty of water, which helps to moisturize the phlegm and easily get rid of it.
2. Sports: regular exercise, such as walking or swimming, can help ease the mucus production and dispose of it easily with cough.
3. Physical therapy of the chest: the practice of physical therapy of the chest on daily basis helps to reduce the chance of getting frequent infections and keep the chest clean from phlegm.
4. Inhaled treatment: it can liquefy the lung secretions and make it easy to cough it out.
5. Antibiotics: whenever the patient has a chest exacerbation he/she will need oral or intravenous antibiotics based on his clinical status and sputum cultures results. For specific bacteria patients will take inhaled antibiotics for prolonged time to eradicate that bacteria.