

My child's bronchiectasis checklist



Lung
Foundation
Australia

This checklist is designed to help you to manage your child's bronchiectasis with your treating healthcare team. If you are unable to answer **YES** to all of these questions, make an appointment with your doctor or other healthcare professional to discuss the issue further.

Diagnosis

My child's diagnosis of bronchiectasis has been confirmed by a chest CT scan.

A chest CT scan looks in detail at the lung tissue and airways and confirms the diagnosis of bronchiectasis. An accurate diagnosis ensures your child receives the right treatment.

My child has been investigated for possible underlying causes.

Bronchiectasis has many causes. Although, none may be found, your treating healthcare team should investigate whether underlying conditions are found so as to help with overall management.

Bronchiectasis-specific management

My child and I have been taught an airway clearance program by a Respiratory Physiotherapist.

A personalised daily airway clearance routine will help to move mucus and sputum out of the lungs and decrease the risk of infection. An airway clearance program may include breathing techniques, use of positive expiratory pressure devices (PEP), manual physiotherapy, blowing games, aerobic exercise and appropriate use of equipment. The techniques change with age and should be reviewed at least every six months.

My child and I have been shown how to use any devices and these techniques have been checked by my healthcare team.

If your child is prescribed any airway clearance device or an inhaled medication delivery device, you should be shown how to use each device correctly, receive written instructions on the technique and have your child's technique checked. You should also know how to clean the device. Using the correct technique for your devices is important to ensure your child gets the most benefit.

I understand when and how to use my child's Bronchiectasis Action Management Plan (BAMP).

You will know your child's day-to-day baseline symptoms. A flare-up or worsening of symptoms from baseline is also known as an exacerbation. Identifying a flare up early allows you to start treatment. A BAMP provides instructions on what you can do if your child has a flare-up.

My child has regular visits with my healthcare team.

Living well with bronchiectasis is based on a partnership between you, your child and their healthcare team. Your child's bronchiectasis may change over time. It is important to monitor symptoms and sputum. Discuss any changes with their healthcare multidisciplinary team at least six monthly and led by a Respiratory Specialist.

My child's medications are regularly reviewed.

My child's medications are reviewed regularly. If my child has more than one hospitalisation or more than three non-hospitalised exacerbations in the previous 12-months, a 6-month trial of macrolide antibiotics is offered and their response assessed.

I have information about bronchiectasis.

Being informed about bronchiectasis is important. Call Lung Foundation Australia on free call 1800 654 301 to access bronchiectasis information, support and resources. See also crelungs.org.au and improveBE.org.

My child's vaccinations are up-to-date.

Having vaccinations for influenza and pneumococcal pneumonia can reduce the risk of a flare-up (exacerbation) of symptoms, particularly during winter. A COVID-19 vaccination will also reduce the risk of severe illness from COVID-19 (coronavirus).

My family doctor is kept up-to-date on my child's health.

Communication between your specialist's team and your family doctor is important. Your family doctor should receive a letter from your specialist every time they are reviewed.

General management

My child exercises regularly.

The aim of daily exercise is to improve fitness, reduce symptoms of breathlessness and fatigue, and improve quality of life. It may also assist in clearing airway secretions.

My child is growing appropriately, has a healthy diet and I understand their nutritional needs.

Growing well is important in children. Healthy foods and drinking enough water to stay well hydrated helps your child function at their best. Staying in the healthy weight range is important for living well with bronchiectasis and overall wellbeing. Ask to see a dietitian if you need assistance.

My child and my emotional wellbeing.

Living with a chronic condition may affect your child's and your family's emotions and ability to cope. If you or your child are feeling anxious, overwhelmed or experience changes in mood, help is available. Talk to your GP about a Mental Health Treatment Plan.

If I or my child smoke or use e-cigarettes (vape), we have been offered support to quit.

There are many health benefits in quitting smoking or vaping. Many people need help to quit smoking and vaping. Speak to your doctor about treatment options like nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), other treatments and support, such as coaching and counselling.



Find out more

For more information, please visit the Lung Foundation Australia website lungfoundation.com.au.

The Australian Bronchiectasis Registry (ABR) collects data on people with bronchiectasis to facilitate research, improve clinical management practices and maximise opportunities to participate in clinical trials. If you would like to become involved in the registry, you may speak to your child's treating doctor and enquire as to whether they are contributing to the ABR. For further information about the ABR, please contact abr@lungfoundation.com.au or freecall 1800 654 301.

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