

Chronic Cough

USC Pulmonary Clinic

What is it? Chronic cough is a cough that lasts for greater than 8 weeks.

What are the most common causes? The three most common causes are asthma, GERD (reflux), and post nasal drip. Some less common causes include pulmonary fibrosis, ACE inhibitor use, infection, and sarcoidosis.

How is the cause determined? The history of the onset and description of when your cough occurs helps your doctor decide what the most likely cause of YOUR cough is. Breathing tests are done to diagnose asthma. Your doctor may give you a trial of medicine for reflux and/or post nasal drip before doing any specific tests. Often times, chronic cough has more than one cause!

How is it treated? The treatment will depend on the cause. It is important that you give whatever medicine your doctor prescribes *time* to work. Some medicines, or trials OFF of medicines, may take several weeks to months to be effective.

Do:

- ❖ Take the medicines the MD prescribes you.
- ❖ Call the office if you have side affects and feel you need to stop the medicines.
- ❖ Call the office if you cough up any blood or have fever greater than 101. degrees F.

Don't:

- ❖ Stop medicines without telling your doctor.
- ❖ Smoke!!
- ❖ Use cough syrups daily unless your doctor has decided this is the appropriate treatment.

