



The Beacon

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Med-Cert Medical Management Resources

“Guiding your way to better health management”

Bronchitis

A cold or flu can run its course in a couple of weeks but sometimes you may get bronchitis too.

That’s when your bronchial tubes, which carry air to your lungs, get infected and swollen. You end up with a nagging cough and a lot more mucus.

What Causes It? The same viruses that give you a cold or the flu most often also cause bronchitis. Sometimes, though, bacteria are to blame.

In both cases, as your body fights off the germs, your bronchial tubes swell and make more mucus. That means you have smaller openings for air to flow, which can make it harder to breathe.

You may have a bigger chance of getting bronchitis if you have any of the following:

- You have a weaker immune system. This is sometimes the case for older adults and people with ongoing diseases, as well as for babies and young children. Even a cold can make it more likely since your body’s busy fighting off those germs.

- You smoke or live with a smoker.
- You work around substances that bother your lungs, such as chemical fumes or dust. (Examples: coal mining, working around farm animals).
- You live in or travel to a place with poor air quality or lots of pollution.

What are the symptoms? You will definitely have a cough, and you may have various problems with breathing, such as:

- Chest congestion, where your chest feels full or clogged
- A cough that may bring up a lot of mucus that’s clear, white, yellow, or green
- Shortness of breath
- A wheezing or a whistling sound when you breathe

You may also:

- Have body aches and chills
- Feel “wiped out”
- Run a low fever
- Have a runny, stuffy nose
- Have a sore throat

Even after the other symptoms are gone, the cough can last for a few weeks while your bronchial tubes heal and the swelling goes down. If it goes on much longer than that, the problem might be something else.

What are the Treatments? Most of the time, bronchitis goes away on its own within a couple of weeks.

If yours is caused by bacteria (which is rare), your doctor may give you antibiotics.

If you have asthma, allergies, or you’re wheezing, you may need an inhaler. This helps open up your airways and makes it easier to breathe.

To ease your symptoms, you can:

- **Drink a lot of water.** Eight to 12 glasses a day helps thin out your mucus and makes it easier to cough it up.
- **Get plenty of rest.**
- **Take over-the-counter pain relievers.** Ibuprofen, naproxen or aspirin to help with pain. But avoid giving aspirin to children. You can use acetaminophen to help with both pain and fever.
- **Use a humidifier or try steam.** A hot shower can be great for loosening up the mucus.
- **Take over-the-counter cough medicines.** You might take an expectorant (like guaifenesin) during the day to loosen your mucous so it’s easier to cough out. For children, check with your pediatrician before using any cough syrups.

January is Cervical Health Awareness Month

Each year, more than 11,000 women in the United States get cervical cancer. HPV (human papillomavirus) is a very common infection that spreads through sexual activity, and it causes almost all cases of cervical cancer. About 79 million Americans currently have HPV. For more information call: 800-685-5531 or visit:

www.nccc-online.org

Did you know??

In a year an average person sleeps for 122 days out of 365 days....

5 Tips To Help You Stick To Your New Year's Fitness Resolutions

1. **Schedule a competition for 90 days after the New Year.** Adding a competitive element to your fitness goal helps serve as motivation to follow a strategic, long-term training plan.
2. **Selfies lead to success.** Take photos, you'll have visual evidence of your weight loss, rather than strictly sticking to numbers on a scale.
3. **Set up mini-goals to hit each month.** Establish small and specific monthly benchmarks to maintain your motivation.
4. **Choose an accountability partner.** A workout partner provides a powerful level of support to keep you motivated.
5. **Challenge yourself to an extreme workout.** To spice things up ditch the traditional gym and challenge yourself to one extreme workout per month to keep things interesting.

DON'T FORGET TO PRECERTIFY

Med-Cert's Toll-free Precert Telephone Number is (800)-356-7126 and should be reflected on your health insurance ID cards.

It is ultimately the responsibility of the employee/participant/member to make sure precertification has been done. Many plans will reduce your benefit amount if you fail to precertify.

Group Health Plans vary from one employer to the next so it is important for you to know what your health plan requires. Call the customer service representative for your health plan if you have questions.

Below is a list of some of the common Standard Precertification Notification Requirements.

- *Inpatient Hospital Stays*
- *Inpatient Treatment for Mental and Emotional Conditions or Substance Abuse*
- *Inpatient Rehabilitation Therapy*
- *Skilled Nursing Care*
- *Outpatient Stays over 12 hours*
- *Outpatient Surgeries*
- *Physical Therapy after first 6 visits*
- *Speech Therapy after first 6 visits*
- *Home Health Care*
- *Hospice Care*
- *Maternity – on confirmation of pregnancy (or at least 2 months prior to delivery) and again on admission for delivery*
- *Outpatient Procedures – refer to your Employee Benefit Plan booklet as some plans require precertification for outpatient procedures*

Med-Cert provides:

Utilization Management, Maternity Management, Large Case and Wellness Disease Management, Transplant Coordination and Stop Loss Assessments
For information on any of our services, please call 866-261-5657 (toll free). We are on the internet. Visit us at:
www.medcertinc.com

Recipe Corner



Lemon and Vanilla Panna Cotta

Ingredients

- 1 envelope unflavored gelatin
- 2 cups 2% milk
- 2 tablespoons 2% milk
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 2 1/4 cups plain fat-free yogurt
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 1 cup raspberries, red and golden
- 2 cups mixed strawberries, or blueberries
- 2 peaches, peeled, thinly sliced
- 2 teaspoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice

Directions

1. Sprinkle gelatin over 2 tablespoons of milk in small bowl; let soften 5 minutes.
2. Place remaining 2 cups milk, sugar, and vanilla in a saucepan. Bring mixture to simmer; remove pan from heat.
3. Add gelatin mixture to saucepan and stir until dissolved.
4. Place yogurt in medium bowl; whisk until smooth.
5. Gradually whisk milk mixture and lemon zest into yogurt.
6. Pour mixture into eight 4-oz ramekins. Chill until set, about 4 hours.
7. Toss fruit together and refrigerate until needed.
8. To remove from ramekins, run sharp knife around edges; invert onto plate. Top with fruit and serve.

Makes 8 servings.



This newsletter is brought to you courtesy of Med-Cert Inc. Our sources for this edition are Web MD and Prevention Magazine.