



PATIENT INFORMATION

# BRONCHIECTASIS IN CHILDREN



## What is Bronchiectasis?

- Bronchiectasis is a type of scarring in the lungs
- Mucus (or sputum) can collect in the scarred areas
- Infections can occur in the trapped mucus
- Repeated infections can cause damage and more scarring to the lungs

The scarring is usually permanent, however with good treatment there can be some improvement and it is possible to prevent further damage. This is especially important in young children as their lungs are still growing.

## Symptoms of Bronchiectasis

- A wet sounding cough (mucus in the airways)
- Repeated chest infections
- Your child may have a wheeze when they breathe

## What causes Bronchiectasis in Children?

- Bronchiectasis is most commonly due to severe chest infections such as pneumonia
- There are other causes of bronchiectasis and usually some tests would be carried out to look for other causes such as:
  - a problem with the immune system,
  - an underlying inherited disease such as cystic fibrosis
  - food or drink accidentally going into the lungs (aspiration).
- Sometimes there is no known cause for bronchiectasis

## Diagnosing Bronchiectasis in Children

The consultant will ask you more about your child's medical history and their symptoms. If they think your child might have bronchiectasis then they may recommend further tests such as a CT scan to confirm the diagnosis.

## What is the Treatment for Bronchiectasis?

**Chest Physiotherapy.** Your child will usually need chest physiotherapy once or twice a day depending on the severity of their symptoms, which will help clear mucus from the lungs. The physiotherapist will advise you on the best method for your child.

**Exercise.** Playing sport or doing regular exercise is important to help clear mucus from the lungs and to maintain good lung function.

**Antibiotics.** Your child may need a course of antibiotics if they are coughing more than usual or showing signs of being unwell. The antibiotic treatment is usually up to 2 weeks.

**Inhalers.** If there is asthma or an asthmatic tendency also present, inhalers may be prescribed.

## **What to expect during a clinic appointment**

Your child will usually see the Consultant, Respiratory Nurse and Physiotherapist during a clinic review. The review will involve:

- Height and weight measurement to check growth
- A lung function test – this involves breathing into a machine to see how well the lungs are working
- A mucus/sputum sample or cough swab/plates. This is tested for bacterial infection. If there is infection present, a member of the team will inform you and advise on the correct treatment course. Results can take up to 7 working days.
- Assessment of physiotherapy techniques: it is helpful to bring your airway clearance device to each appointment if you have been given one so that the techniques can be checked.
- Discussion of how your child is getting on, and changes to medication or treatment as necessary.

## **Contact details**

If you would like to contact the team please text or phone the Respiratory team mobile:

**07775 682570**

Please only leave non urgent messages

## **Other information**

The following internet websites contain information that you may find useful.

- [www.worcsacute.nhs.uk](http://www.worcsacute.nhs.uk)  
Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust
- [www.patient.co.uk](http://www.patient.co.uk)  
Information fact sheets on health and disease
- [www.rcoa.ac.uk](http://www.rcoa.ac.uk)  
Information leaflets by the Royal College of Anaesthetists about 'Having an anaesthetic'
- [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)  
On-line health encyclopaedia

**If your symptoms or condition worsens, or if you are concerned about anything, please call your GP, 111, or 999.**

## **Patient Experience**

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

## **Feedback**

Feedback is really important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments and clinics at our hospitals. We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

## **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team. We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences.

Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help.

If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns. You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

## **How to contact PALS:**

**Telephone Patient Services: 0300 123 1732 or via email at: [wah-tr.PET@nhs.net](mailto:wah-tr.PET@nhs.net)**

## **Opening times:**

The PALS telephone lines are open Monday to Thursday from 8.30am to 4.30pm and Friday: 8.30am to 4.00pm. Please be aware that a voicemail service is in use at busy times, but messages will be returned as quickly as possible.

If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.