



Over-the-counter prescription for acute bronchitis or “chest cold”

**The doctor has diagnosed you with acute bronchitis.
The symptoms include:**

Sore throat	What does this mean? Your bronchial tree is inflamed. The bronchial tree consists of tubes that carry air into your lungs. When these tubes get infected, they swell and mucus forms inside them and makes it hard for you to breathe. The doctor can diagnose you with an X-ray to rule out pneumonia, which is more serious than bronchitis.
Fever	
Cough that brings up clear, yellow or green mucus	
Chest congestion	
Shortness of breath	
Wheezing	
Chills	
Mild body aches	
Watery eyes	
Fatigue (feeling tired)	
Mild headache	
Can occur after an upper respiratory infection	

**Acute bronchitis means you have a virus.
Antibiotics will not help you.**

What does this mean?

- Drink fluids, but avoid caffeine and alcohol. Water is nature’s best way to clear mucus.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Increase the humidity in your home or use a humidifier.
- Don’t smoke.

Recommendations:

Medications and other home remedies can help your symptoms and get you back on your feet.

Your doctor suggests you take the following:

- Beta-agonist inhaler for wheezing – will be a prescription from your doctor
- High-dose, episodic inhaled corticosteroids for wheezing but not as a preventive therapy – will be a prescription from your doctor
- Acetaminophen (commonly called “Tylenol®”) for pain, reduce inflammation, and lower your fever
- Ibuprofen can be more effective for pain, reducing inflammation, decreasing the discomfort, or lowering your fever if it’s greater than 101°F at the dosage of: _____
- Honey for coughing in children older than 1-year-old
- Cough drops/lozenges if older than 4 years old for sore throat
- Cough medicine for anyone older than 6 years of age: _____
- Guaifenesin helps thin the mucus and can help thin thick discolored drainage. Includes Robitussin®, Mucofen®, Mucinex®, Humibid LA® or Humibid-e®

When to go back to your doctor:

- Fever higher than 100.4 °F
- Cough with bloody mucus
- Shortness of breath or trouble breathing
- Symptoms that last more than 3 weeks – if it’s just the cough, wait a couple of weeks longer
- Repeated episodes of bronchitis

References:

1. Get Smart Campaign, [cdc.gov/getsmart](https://www.cdc.gov/getsmart), 9/25/17
2. [familydoctor.org](https://www.familydoctor.org), Acute Bronchitis, 9/25/17