

Living with Bronchiectasis

(pūkahukahu hauā)

Things to know

This checklist has the information that will help you understand and manage your bronchiectasis symptoms.

STATEMENT	EXPLANATION	
 I have had a chest CT scan that shows that I have bronchiectasis.	A CT scan of your chest is an X-ray machine that gives a detailed picture of your lungs. This can show where and how much bronchiectasis you have in your lungs.	☐
 I understand what bronchiectasis is and my healthcare team have explained where to find more information.	Understanding bronchiectasis, the causes and the treatments will help to better manage your health condition. → healthify.nz/health-a-z/b/bronchiectasis	☐
 I know to regularly check my sputum (phlegm) colour, stickiness and volume.	Knowing your 'normal' is important. This way you can more quickly recognise when you may have an increase of your bronchiectasis symptoms.	☐
 I know my symptoms of a chest infection.	Being able to recognise an early change in your bronchiectasis symptoms means you can start treatment earlier. Symptoms may include: feeling unwell, more sputum, sputum colour change, feeling more tired and more breathless than normal.	☐
 I know when to start my emergency supply of antibiotics.	Talk to your healthcare team about having an emergency supply of antibiotics at home for when you are unwell and have signs and symptoms of a chest infection - sometimes called a back pocket prescription. Also check on steps to take if you are not getting better.	☐
 I have been taught sputum clearance exercises and understand the importance of doing these every day.	Sputum clearance exercises will help to clear sputum (phlegm) from your lungs and reduce the risk of a chest infection. These are taught to you by a physiotherapist and can include breathing through a device (PEP device) and nebulising with prescribed saline (salty water). → bronchiectasis.com.au/resources/airway-clearance-videos	☐
 I have a written bronchiectasis action plan (self-management plan).	A personalised action plan will help you to manage your symptoms on a daily basis. It will help you to know when you should start antibiotics and when to increase your sputum clearance techniques	☐
 I know that regular exercise and eating well are important.	Regular exercise (5-7 days a week) that makes you 'huff and puff' will help to keep you fit and can help to clear your sputum (phlegm). Eating a balanced and varied diet will help with your strength, fitness and help you fight infections.	☐
 If my bronchiectasis makes me breathless my healthcare team have discussed the benefits of a pulmonary rehabilitation programme.	Whole body fitness is important as your muscles need to be strong to support your breathing muscles. Pulmonary rehabilitation is an exercise programme that is designed for those who have a lung condition and helps to improve the management of your symptoms. Ask your healthcare team for a referral to your local programme if you have breathlessness.	☐
 I get my regular free vaccines.	Make sure you get your flu vaccine every year. This is free to people who have a health condition such as bronchiectasis (pūkahukahu hauā). You should keep up-to-date with your COVID vaccination and booster doses. Ask your primary care team about the pneumonia vaccine (there is a \$ cost for this vaccine).	☐
 If I smoke, vape or use cannabis I have been encouraged to stop.	If you smoke cigarettes, vape, or smoke cannabis, it is very important to stop. Ask your healthcare team about how to quit and for a referral to a smoking cessation programme. → healthify.nz/hauora-wellbeing/s/smoking-treatments-for-quitting-smoking	☐
 I have regular appointments with my healthcare team.	A regular review with your primary healthcare team (general practice) is encouraged, as bronchiectasis may change over time and your treatment plan may need to be adjusted.	☐