

## Cough

Coughing is a reflex that keeps your throat and airways clear. Although it can be annoying, coughing helps your body heal or protect itself. Coughs can be either acute or chronic. Acute coughs begin suddenly and usually last no more than 2 to 3 weeks. Acute coughs are the kind you most often get with a cold or flu. Chronic coughs last longer than 2 to 3 weeks. Causes of chronic cough include



- Asthma
- Allergies
- COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- GERD (gastroesophageal reflux disease)
- Smoking
- Throat disorders, such as croup in young children
- Some medicines

Water can help ease your cough - whether you drink it or add it to the air with a steamy shower or vaporizer. If you have a cold or the flu, antihistamines may work better than non-prescription cough medicines. Children under four should not have cough medicine. For children over four, use caution and read labels carefully.

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