

NIH Clinical Center Patient Education Materials

After your bronchoscopy

Bronchoscopies are usually done in the Procedure Area or the Operating Room. They are generally an outpatient procedure but sometimes require an inpatient stay. Your healthcare team will monitor you after the procedure until you have recovered. Your doctor will decide if you need to be admitted to the hospital overnight.

Common Side Effects and Care:

Fever:

You may get a fever the evening after your bronchoscopy.

- If you develop a fever higher than 101 degrees Fahrenheit (38.3 degrees Celsius) you may take acetaminophen (Tylenol) as recommended by your NIH doctor, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant.
- If your fever lasts longer than 24 hours, call your NIH primary research team.
- Some patients may need to contact the research team right away for fever higher than 101 degrees Fahrenheit. Follow the advice from your team.

Sore Throat:

- Take throat lozenges (regular or sugar free) as needed.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Rest your voice for a day.
- Smoking may increase throat irritation.

Coughing:

- Small amounts of phlegm are common for 24 hours after the procedure.
- Increased coughing occurring beyond 24 hours after the procedure can happen.

Side Effects requiring notification of your research team:

- Intravenous site redness or drainage
- Bleeding (more than a teaspoon) from your nose or throat

After the procedure:

Breathing:

- Cough and take deep breaths for 24 hours after your bronchoscopy

Food and Fluids:

- Because your throat may feel numb for several hours, you cannot eat or drink anything until your nurse determines that your gag and swallow reflexes have returned.
- Restart eating soft foods and then regular meals when you feel ready, unless otherwise instructed by your health team.

Activity:

- You may feel tired or dizzy after the procedure. When you feel ready, slowly return to your regular activities.

Medications:

- Restart all of your previous medications as directed by your doctor.
- Your doctor will tell you if and when it is safe to resume anti-inflammatory medications or blood thinners.

24 Hour Restrictions after Bronchoscopy (due to the effects of sedation):

- **Do not** drive or operate any machinery. (For example, do not drive a car or operate a lawn mower.)
- **Do not** drink alcohol.
- **Do not** make important decisions or sign contracts or legal documents.

Emergency Precautions:

Go to the nearest emergency room if you have any of the following:

- Difficulty breathing
- Chest pain or discomfort
- Severe throat pain or neck swelling
- Severe dizziness, weakness, or a fast heart rate
- Large amount of bleeding: from your nose or throat

If you have questions or concerns about this procedure, call the page operator at 301-496-1211, and ask to speak with your primary research team.

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National Institutes of Health Clinical Center
Bethesda, MD 20892

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