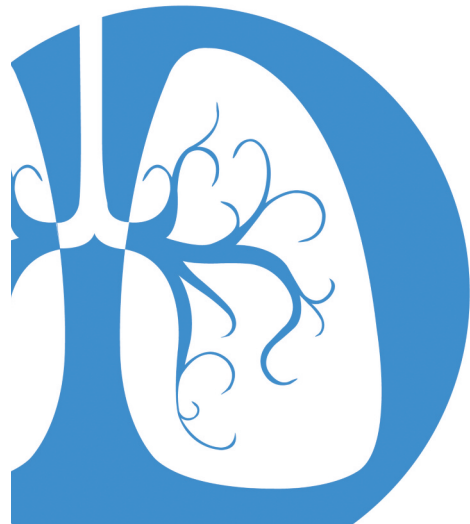




A lifetime of specialist care

Royal Brompton & Harefield **NHS**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Chronic cough clinic





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*This leaflet gives you general information on the chronic cough clinic. It does not replace the need for personal advice from a healthcare professional. Please ask us if you have any questions.*

Welcome to the Royal Brompton and Harefield hospitals chronic cough clinic. The clinic was set up more than 20 years ago and is the

largest specialist cough clinic in London and the South East. We see patients who have been referred from all over the UK.

## Why do we cough?

Normally, a cough is a protective reflex everyone has. You may cough to clear your throat or you may need to cough when inhaled smoke irritates your lungs. A cough happens when you have an

automatic (reflex) muscle action that forces air up and out of your lower airways (lungs) and into the upper airways (windpipe, nose and mouth).

## What is “chronic cough”?

Doctors call a cough “short-term” (acute) if it lasts for less than three weeks. Acute cough usually runs its course without the need for treatment. The most common cause is a viral infection.

“Long-term” (chronic) cough lasts for longer than eight weeks. Chronic cough is when you feel the need to cough continually. You may experience a tickling sensation in the back of your throat and then an uncontrollable urge to cough.



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## What can cause chronic cough?

Chronic cough can be caused or aggravated by one or a combination of the following:

- Asthma – undiagnosed or under-treated asthma.
- Postnasal drip – mucus in the nose drips down the back of the throat.
- Stomach acid reflux – stomach acid washes up the food pipe and spills into the lungs.
- Lung diseases – for example, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), which usually affects smokers, lung fibrosis (scarring of the lungs), lung infections (such as tuberculosis, whooping cough).
- Medication – for example, angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitor medicines, which are used to treat high blood pressure. For more information on ACE inhibitors, visit [www.patient.co.uk/health/ace-inhibitors](http://www.patient.co.uk/health/ace-inhibitors) and for more on high blood pressure, visit [www.patient.co.uk/health/high-blood-pressure-hypertension](http://www.patient.co.uk/health/high-blood-pressure-hypertension)

Sometimes no cause is found and we call this “idiopathic” or refractory chronic cough. We see many patients in our clinic with this type of cough.

## What happens when I arrive at the clinic?

You will be met by one of our clinic nurses, who will initially assess your breathing with simple blowing tests and ask you to fill in a brief

questionnaire to give us some background information related to your cough. You may also have a chest X-ray.

## Who will I see?

You will then be seen by a member of our specialist cough team. Our team includes specialist respiratory doctors, speech and language therapists, and ear, nose and throat doctors. Every member of our team has expertise in assessing

and managing coughs. You may not see the specialist you were initially referred to and you may not see the same doctor at your next visit. We would like to reassure you that members of our team work closely together.

## What happens during the consultation?

We will discuss your cough with you, so that we can understand how it affects you, what investigations you have had and what treatments, if any, you have tried. Usually, we will have this information in the referral letter from your GP.

We will talk with you about what we feel may be causing your cough and how we are going to try to help you. This may involve some more tests and investigations.

## What happens next?

If you need some tests or investigations, we will arrange these for you. Sometimes you may need to come to the hospital for an appointment

in the day, or you may need to stay at the hospital overnight, depending on the tests you need.



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## What happens after the investigations?

If you have been admitted for your tests with an overnight stay, you will be seen the following day by one of us and we will explain your results to you. Together we will decide on your treatment.

If your tests have been booked in with a day visit, we will discuss your results and treatment with you at your next clinic appointment.

## What happens in the long term?

The team will discuss the results of any investigations with you and initiate a treatment plan to help with your cough. The service is set up to provide a specialist opinion to your local GP or specialist and to assist them to establish a long-term plan of

care to help manage your cough.

Some of our patients need follow-up appointments with us, which means they need to travel to the hospital periodically. If you are one of these patients, we will discuss this with you.

## What if I am interested in participating in research?

Royal Brompton & Harefield NHS Foundation Trust has a worldwide reputation for heart and lung research. We are working on numerous research projects to bring benefits to patients in the form of new, more effective and efficient treatments for heart and lung disease. We are also responsible for

medical advances taken up across the NHS and beyond.

Our main research partner is the National Heart and Lung Institute at Imperial College London. We are happy to discuss any potential research projects with you at any of your visits to the hospital.

## More information

If you have any questions regarding your appointment, please call appointments: **020 7351 8011**.

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If you have concerns about any aspect of the service you have received in hospital and feel unable to talk to those people responsible for your care, call PALS on:

- Royal Brompton Hospital – 020 7349 7715
- Harefield Hospital – 01895 826 572

You can also email [pals@rbht.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@rbht.nhs.uk). This is a confidential service.

Royal Brompton Hospital  
Sydney Street  
London  
SW3 6NP  
tel: 020 7352 8121  
textphone: (18001) 020 7352 8121

Harefield Hospital  
Hill End Road  
Harefield  
Middlesex  
UB9 6JH  
tel: 01895 823 737  
textphone: (18001) 01895 823 737

Website: [www.rbht.nhs.uk](http://www.rbht.nhs.uk)

إذا كنت ترغب في الحصول على ترجمة فورية لمضمون هذه الوثيقة إلى اللغة العربية، يرجى منك الاتصال بأحد مستخدمينا بجناح المصلحة التي يتم فيها استشفائك. أحد موظفينا سيسعى لترتيب إجراءات الترجمة وإتمامها في الوقت المناسب لك.

Brosurteki bilginin Türkçe tercumesi için tedavi görüyor olduğunuz bölüme bas vurunuz. Bölüm personeli tercümenin gerçekleşmesini en kısa zamanda ayarlayacaktır.