Cough, Generic

There are many things that can cause a cough, and we are not certain what is causing your cough. Cough may be triggered by pollen, dust, animal dander, molds, certain foods, respiratory infections, exposure to smoke, exercise, or other things that cause allergic reactions or allergies (*allergens*).

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Use prescription medications as ordered by your caregiver.
- Avoid pollen, dust, animal dander, molds, smoke, or anything that seems to cause coughing at home or at work.
- You may have fewer attacks if you decrease dust in your home. Electrostatic air cleaners may help.
- It may help to replace or cover your pillows or mattress with materials less likely to cause allergies.
- If you are not on fluid restriction, drink 8 to 10 glasses of water each day.
- Discuss possible exercise routines with your caregiver.
- If animal dander is the cause of your cough, you may need to get rid of pets.
- A cold steam vaporizer may help your cough.
- Avoid cold outside air if this causes coughing episodes.
- If you had X-rays today or laboratory work done, make sure you know how to get your results if they were not given to you today. Leave a telephone number with your caregiver where you can be reached and make sure you are available to receive the call. Not all test results are available during your visit. If your test results are not back during the visit, make an appointment with your caregiver to find out the results. Do not assume everything is normal if you have not heard from your caregiver or the medical facility. It is important for you to follow up on all of your test results.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You develop wheezing and/or shortness of breath.
- An oral temperature above 102º F (38.9º C) develops.
- You have muscle aches, chest pain, or thickening of mucus or phlegm (*sputum*).
- Your sputum changes from clear or white to yellow, green, gray, or bloody.
- You have any problems that may be related to the medicine you are taking (such as a rash, itching, swelling, or trouble breathing).

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- There is increased coughing and/or shortness of breath.
- You have increased difficulty breathing.
- Any of the problems you had are getting worse.
- You develop chest pain, nausea or vomiting or have pain in your chest that radiates into your arms, neck, jaw or teeth. **CALL your local emergency services (911 in U.S.)** Do not attempt to drive yourself for medical care.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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