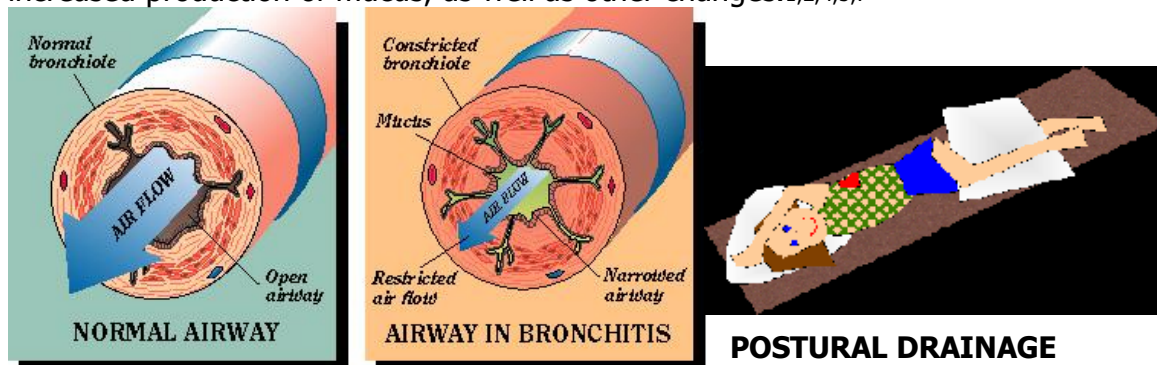


CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE CHRONIC BRONCHITIS

Definition: Is a term that applies to a number of chronic conditions, all of which obstruct the flow of air in the conducting airways of the lower respiratory tract. Chronic bronchitis is a long-term inflammation of the bronchi in the lungs, which results in increased production of mucus, as well as other changes.^{1,2,4,5,7}



Causes: Cigarette smoking is the main cause of chronic bronchitis. When tobacco smoke is inhaled into the lungs, it irritates the airways and they produce mucus. People who have been exposed for a long time to other things that irritate their lungs, such as chemical fumes, pollution, dust, repeated infections and other substances, can also get chronic bronchitis.^{1,2,4,7}

Signs and symptoms: Symptoms of chronic bronchitis include a cough that produces mucus (sometimes called sputum), trouble breathing and a feeling of tightness in your chest. To be classified as chronic bronchitis, cough and expectoration must occur most days for at least three months per year, for two years in a row. Other causes of symptoms, such as tuberculosis or other lung diseases, must be excluded.^{2,4,7}

Pathophysiology: Airways are the tubes in your lungs that air passes through. They are also called bronchial tubes. When the airways are irritated, thick mucus forms in them. The mucus plugs up the airways and makes it hard for you to get air into your lungs. The persistent irritation can damage alveoli and bronchial walls of the lungs. When left untreated, this may lead to other diseases such as: cor pulmonale, heart failure and typical metaplasia (cancer).^{1,2,4,7}

Medications: Medicines called bronchodilators are used to treat chronic bronchitis. This medicine dilates, or opens the airways in your lungs and helps the patient breathe better. Other medications also includes antibiotics and humidification therapy.^{2,3,4}

Physical Therapy: Physical therapists aims to: 1. Prevent accumulation of secretions by teaching deep and effective cough and positioning the patient in postural drainage. 2. Promote relaxation of muscles by positioning the patient for relaxation and breathing exercises. Improve the mobility of the chest and improve posture by using exercises, postural training and deep breathing.^{2,4,6}

References:

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