



Drug-induced pulmonary fibrosis

Any medication can have side effects; some medicines can damage the lungs and cause pulmonary fibrosis. You and your doctor have to weigh up the risks and benefits before you start a medicine. Sometimes the choices are difficult, especially when it's a life-saving treatment.

Some of the commoner medication types that are known to carry the risk of pulmonary fibrosis include certain:

- cancer chemotherapy drugs
- drugs for heart conditions, particularly amiodarone
- immunosuppressant drugs such as methotrexate
- antibiotics, particularly nitrofurantoin
- biological agents, used to treat cancer or immune disorders

Some recreational drugs can also cause pulmonary fibrosis.

The situation varies for each individual and for each drug. Breathing problems from drug-induced pulmonary fibrosis can come on suddenly, or develop more slowly over time.

If a drug has caused the fibrosis, people often get better quickly if the medication is stopped before much damage is done. So identifying this problem, and stopping the drug is the key intervention. Unfortunately, some people have lasting lung damage.

Treatment

Your doctor will stop you taking the drug causing fibrosis. Steroid medication can help calm down your body's response to the medication.

Further information

You can find more information about pulmonary fibrosis in the following downloads:

- *Pulmonary fibrosis – What it is and how it affects your breathing*
- *Pulmonary fibrosis – Diagnosis and tests*
- *Pulmonary fibrosis – Treatment and support*

Get in touch with us to find support near you.

Helpline: **03000 030 555**

Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm

Ringing our helpline never costs more than a local call and is usually free, even from a mobile.

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We value feedback on our information. To let us know your views, and for the most up to date version of this information and references, call the helpline or visit **blf.org.uk**