

— LIVING WITH —

NTM

LUNG DISEASE

You are not alone – Use this guide for a quick overview of the information, support, and resources available to you on your NTM journey

WHAT IS **NTM**?

Nontuberculous mycobacterial (NTM) lung disease is an infection caused by a type of bacteria that are **common in the environment**. NTM bacteria are aerosolized. This means they exist in water particles that float in the air and are breathed in.

The most common species of NTM in the US is *Mycobacterium avium* complex (MAC).

HOW DID **YOU GET IT**?

Everyone comes into contact with NTM bacteria during their daily lives. NTM bacteria can be found in places such as tap water, showerheads, steam from hot tubs, and soil from parks and gardens. However, most people do not become infected with NTM lung disease because their lungs are healthy enough to clear NTM bacteria.

People with a history of lung conditions, like **bronchiectasis, COPD, or asthma**, are most likely to develop an infection.

This is because the damage from these conditions can make it easier for NTM to infect your lungs, and more difficult to get rid of NTM. You can also get infected if you have had severe or chronic pneumonia.

NTM lung disease is more common in women than in men. People aged 65 and older, a population that is expected to **nearly double by 2030**, are at an increased risk. However, people as young as 45 years could also get infected. Where you live is another risk factor for NTM. In fact, 7 out of 10 cases occur along a coastal area.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

NTM lung disease can make you sick and cause you to experience symptoms over and over, like coughing, fatigue, and shortness of breath. If ignored, **your symptoms can worsen.**

When you already have a lung condition, NTM bacteria can make it worse. An NTM infection can cause permanent damage to your lungs over time if left untreated.

IF YOU HAVE:

BRONCHIECTASIS + NTM

Your symptoms, like a cough, may get worse and you could find yourself using airway clearance devices more often.

COPD or ASTHMA + NTM

You may experience more flare-ups, difficulty breathing, and you may have a harder time catching your breath.

WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

There are treatment options for NTM lung disease. You and your doctor will work together and decide which treatment option is right for you.

Remember that sticking to your treatment regimen is extremely important. That's because when you stay on treatment, there is a greater chance you could get rid of NTM.

SUPPORT & RESOURCES

Valuable tools that can help you through your journey

Join *AboutNTM Support*

Sign up today for helpful information, support, and resources to help you along the way.

Watch real NTM stories

You are not alone. People with NTM have shared their stories in hopes of spreading more awareness of this disease. Get to know Betsy, Donna, and Jim and learn from their experiences.

Connect with people living with NTM

You might have a lot of questions, but there are NTM communities for people just like you.

- NTM Info & Research support groups
ntminfo.org
- Bronch and NTM 360 Social online community
bronchiectasisandntminitiative.org

For more info, visit

AboutNTM.com