

Haemoptysis

Haemoptysis is the medical term for coughing up blood or having blood-stained mucus from your lungs or airways. It is a bit like having a nosebleed, but instead of blood coming from your nose, it shows up when you cough.

What causes haemoptysis

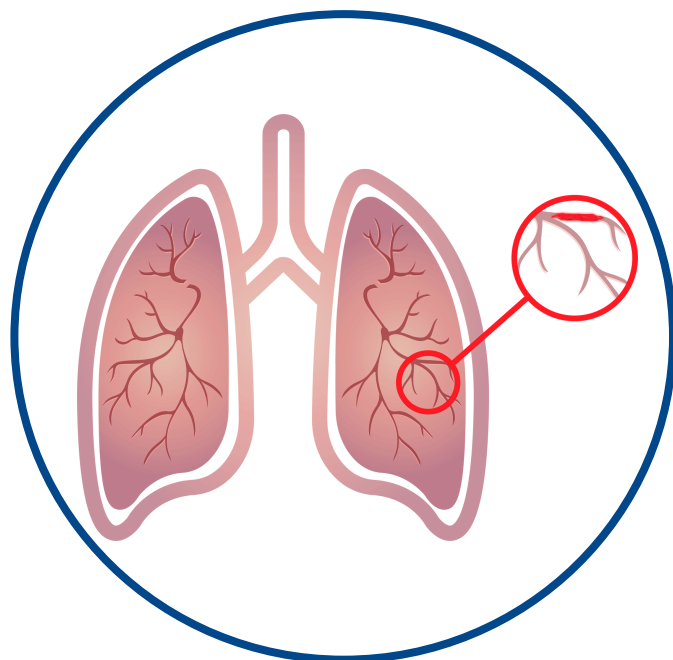
In CF, inflammation and infection in the lungs can make the small blood vessels in the airways fragile, and just like the tiny vessels in your nose, they can break and cause a bleed. Although the blood vessel will close up in the normal clotting process, there is no place for the blood in the airway to go except to be coughed up in the sputum.

One of the most common causes of haemoptysis is an infection but it may also happen following strenuous physical activity or a bout of coughing. Sometimes it can happen for no obvious reason, but it is worth discussing any new medications or activities, that you think may be associated with the bleeding, with your CF team.

Haemoptysis is different for everyone and something you may never experience. It used to be more common for people with CF however with the introduction of new modulator medications, such as Trikafta, the frequency and severity of haemoptysis have reduced significantly.

How is it treated?

Scant or streaky haemoptysis (blood stained or blood streaked mucus, <2 tablespoons over 24 hours) may require monitoring and possibly modification of airway clearance routines or medications until it has resolved.



Mild to moderate haemoptysis (> 2 tablespoons to 1 cup over 24 hours) may require treatment with antibiotics for an underlying lung infection. Additional medication to help the blood clot may also be needed and airway clearance treatments and usual medications may be modified, depending on the amount of bleeding.

In cases of severe haemoptysis (>1 cup over 24 hours), emergency hospital treatment will be required. Usual treatments, including airway clearance, will be stopped and can only be restarted following medical advice from the CF team.

Regardless of the amount of bleeding, it is always best to speak to the CF team so they can advise how to manage it based on individual circumstances.

Useful resources

- [Haemoptysis](#) (CF Physio)
- [Haemoptysis](#) (Health Direct)