



In MAC lung disease,
that “small cough” can pull your world apart

Even small changes in your symptoms can mean
something big. Get to know MAC lung disease so you and
your doctor can work together to take action.

*Know MAC
Progression*

MAC=Mycobacterium avium complex.

What is MAC lung disease?

MAC lung disease, a type of NTM lung disease, is a serious infection caused by bacteria that are common in the environment. People can get MAC lung disease when they breathe in the bacteria.

People with other lung conditions like bronchiectasis, COPD, or asthma are at a greater risk of developing MAC lung disease.

MAC lung disease is the most common form of NTM lung disease, making up

~80% of all cases
in the US

The bacteria can exist in tiny water droplets and soil particles in the air and can be found in places such as:



Tap water



Showerheads



**Steam from tubs
and showers**



**Mist from water used
to wash dishes**



**Soil from parks, gardens,
and the environment**

Understanding symptom changes can help you recognize if your MAC lung disease is getting worse

Even small changes in symptoms can impact daily activities, like going for a walk or meeting with friends, and may signal that your MAC lung disease is progressing over time.

Signs that your MAC lung disease may be getting worse:

MORE COUGHING

A chronic cough that you can't get rid of, like a "coughing fit" or a cough that comes and goes

MORE OUT OF BREATH

When everyday activities, like walking your dog or climbing stairs, leave you short of breath, wheezing, or feeling tightness in your chest more often

MORE TIRED

Feeling tired or exhausted more often, making it hard to do daily activities

MORE UNEXPECTED WEIGHT LOSS

Sudden, unexplained weight loss and/or loss of appetite

Learn how untreated MAC lung disease can damage your lungs and how to work with your doctor to create a treatment plan at [KnowMACprogression.com](https://www.knowmacprogression.com).

What happens if MAC lung disease gets worse?

MAC lung disease progression means more than just worsening symptoms—it can also affect your lung health. In some cases, as MAC lung disease gets worse, you could develop irreversible lung damage—even if your symptoms are mild.

That's why it's important to track any changes you notice in your symptoms. Use the scale below to help you recognize changes in your symptoms.



Coughing:

- ☐ No change ☐ Slightly worse ☐ Much worse



Shortness of breath:

- ☐ No change ☐ Slightly worse ☐ Much worse



Tiredness:

- ☐ No change ☐ Slightly worse ☐ Much worse



Unexpected weight loss:

- ☐ No change ☐ Slightly worse ☐ Much worse



Since your last appointment, what other symptoms or changes have you noticed? List them here:

Partnering with your doctor to find the right treatment plan for you

MAC lung disease can cause damage to the lungs that can worsen over time. That is why it's important to work with your doctor to create a plan to help reduce your symptoms and manage the infection.

If you have any concerns about starting a new treatment, talk to your doctor about what to expect so you feel more prepared.

**You're not only a patient—
you're the advocate for your personal experience.**
**Your input is important to help your doctor figure out
the right MAC lung disease treatment plan for you.**

If either of these are your goals for your MAC lung disease, the right treatment plan may help you reach them.

- ✓ IMPROVE SYMPTOMS
- ✓ GET MAC-NEGATIVE



If you notice any small changes in your symptoms that affect your daily life, tell your doctor so you can work together on a treatment plan that's right for you.

Support, resources, and tools for those living with MAC lung disease

You and your loved ones may have questions about MAC lung disease—what it is, how you got it, and what comes next. You're not alone on this journey.

Resources are available to help you learn more, explore treatment options, find a healthcare professional, or connect with others who understand what it's like to live with MAC lung disease. This includes online and in-person support groups where you can share experiences, exchange information, or simply find someone to listen.

Communities that can help support you on your journey with MAC lung disease:



NTM Lung Disease Info & Research (NTMir)

Visit ntminfo.org/support-groups to learn more.



Bronchiectasis & NTM Association

Visit bronchandntm.org/Community to learn more.

Sign up for updates to get helpful information about MAC lung disease, learn about treatment options, and find support resources at KnowMACprogression.com.

Words to know in MAC lung disease

Below are definitions of some terms used throughout this brochure:

Asthma: A lung disease that inflames and narrows the airways, causing wheezing, coughing, and tightness in the chest

Bronchiectasis: A disease that causes permanent enlargement of parts of the lung airways. Symptoms typically include chronic cough with mucus production, shortness of breath, coughing up blood, and wheezing

COPD: Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease is a lung disease that makes it hard to breathe and gets worse over time

MAC lung disease: *Mycobacterium avium* complex lung disease is the most common type of NTM lung disease and is noncontagious

NTM (nontuberculous mycobacterial) lung disease: A serious lung infection caused by bacteria that are common in the environment

Progression: Whenever a disease, such as MAC lung disease, becomes worse



KnowMAC Progression

Talk to your doctor if you notice any change
in your symptoms and to learn if there's
a treatment plan that could help you

Visit [KnowMACprogression.com](https://www.knowmacprogression.com)
to learn more about MAC lung disease.



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