

Pneumonia

Pneumonia may be caused by:

- ▶ Bacteria. Pneumococcus, a type of bacteria, causes pneumococcal pneumonia, the most common type of bacterial pneumonia.
- Viruses. Influenza (flu) virus is one of the most common causes of viral pneumonia.
- Fungi (rare).
- Parasites (rare).

How is it spread?

- When a person with pneumonia sneezes, coughs, talks, or laughs, germs can spread into the air.
- ▶ The germs can spread to people and surfaces up to 6 feet away.
- Germs can spread to your hands if you touch anything that has the germs on it.
- If you then touch your eyes, nose or mouth before cleaning your hands, the germs can get into your body and you might get pneumonia.
- Can occur after contact with germs in your community or during a stay in a healthcare facility.

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Who is at risk?

- ▶ Adults age 65 years or older.
- Persons with certain chronic illnesses or conditions including asthma, diabetes or heart disease.
- Persons with a weakened immune system.
- Smokers.
- ▶ Children younger than 5 years of age.

What are signs of pneumonia?

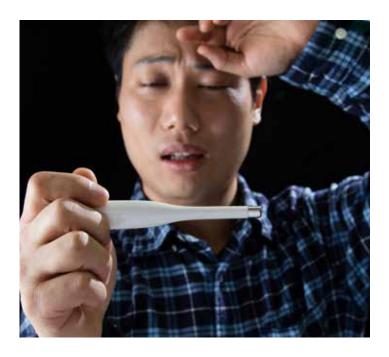
- Cough (sometimes with thick, creamy, or bloody mucus).
- Fever.
- Chills.
- Tiredness.
- ▶ Confusion.
- ▶ Rapid breathing or shortness of breath.
- ▶ Chest pain.
- Loss of appetite.
- ▶ Headache.
- Nausea and vomiting.

How do you know if you have pneumonia?

A health care provider can look for pneumonia by:

- Asking questions about your symptoms.
- Listening to your lungs.
- ▶ Taking a chest X-ray.
- ▶ Taking a blood or mucus sample.

More tests may be done if it gets worse or if you have other health problems.



How is it treated?

- **Bacterial pneumonia** is treated with antibiotics.
- Viral pneumonia can be treated with antiviral drugs.

Mild cases of pneumonia can be treated at home with medicine and rest. Most severe cases are treated in a hospital. In addition to medicine, oxygen and other methods may be used to support breathing and body functions.

What can happen if pneumonia gets worse?

- ▶ The lungs cannot send enough oxygen to the body.
- ▶ Pus pockets and fluid can form around the lung.
- Infection can spread to other areas of the body.
- In severe cases, pneumonia can cause death.

Pneumonia causes about 1 million hospitalizations and about 50,000 deaths a year.

If you have pneumonia:

- ▶ Always finish treatment.
- Clean your hands often with soap and water or alcohol hand rub.
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue or into your sleeve.
- ▶ Do not share eating or drinking utensils, hand towels or toothpaste.
- Do not smoke.
- Clean surfaces often such as:
 - Countertops.
 - Refigerator and freezer handels.
 - Doorknobs.
 - Light switches.



How can you avoid pneumonia?

- Get vaccinated. Discuss pneumococcal vaccine options with your health care provider.
- Keep your hands clean with soap and water or alcohol hand rub.
- Limit or avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Keep healthy. Eat the right foods and get enough sleep.

Learn more:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

Pneumonia Can Be Prevented - Vaccines Can Help www.cdc.gov/Features/Pneumonia/

Pneumococcal Vaccination

www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/pneumo/default.htm

Podcasts at CDC: Preventing Pneumonia

www2c.cdc.gov/podcasts/player.asp?f=268703

U.S. National Library of Medicine:

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www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000145.htm

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