
Q & A

Q: Is pneumonia contagious?

A: The bacteria or viruses that cause pneumonia can be spread if you cough into the air or touch others with germs on your hand. Some helpful tips include using tissues when you cough; washing your hands after you cough or wipe your nose or mouth; and washing before you touch other people, food, cups, and eating utensils. Also avoid sharing your towels, food, and eating utensils with others.

Q: Is there something I can do to prevent pneumonia?

A: Yes. Because pneumonia can be the result of the flu or respiratory infections, you should consider getting a flu shot each fall.

Q: Is there a pneumonia vaccine?

A: According to the American Lung Association, there is a vaccine to fight one type of bacterial pneumonia called pneumococcal pneumonia. It is recommended for people over age of 65, those recovering from severe illness, and those who have a chronic illness such as lung disease, heart disease, kidney disease, or diabetes.

Mission Statement

The Pat Walker Health Center, University Health Services provides professional and comprehensive medical care, mental health care, health education, and health promotion for a diverse community of students, faculty, and staff. We, the University Health Services Staff of the Pat Walker Health Center, have a commitment to physical, mental, spiritual, social, and emotional health, the highest standards of quality, and appreciation of the value of each individual. Through these endeavors we support the educational mission of the University of Arkansas and the growth of each individual.

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Understanding Community Acquired Pneumonia

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Pneumonia is a serious infection and inflammation of the lungs. The air sacs in your lungs become congested and fill with fluids, making it difficult for your blood to absorb oxygen from the lungs. Without enough oxygen in your blood, your body can't work properly.

There are two main types of pneumonia: community - acquired and hospital - acquired. People with community - acquired pneumonia contract the illness from their general environment rather than from a hospital setting.

Pneumonia often follows a cold or flu.

Bacteria that are normally present in your mouth and throat can multiply and spread to the lungs, inflaming the air sacs. This can occur when your resistance to infection is weakened due to illness, advanced age, malnutrition, and other factors.

Bacterial pneumonia can develop suddenly or gradually. In severe cases, symptoms include chills, chattering teeth, severe chest pain, and a cough that produced a rust colored or greenish mucous.

Pneumonia can be extremely dangerous and sometimes life-threatening in the very young, the elderly, pregnant women, and those who already have heart and lung disease.

Your doctor may treat your pneumonia with an antibiotic.

Antibiotics are strong medicines that fight bacteria infections. Remember that it is important to continue the antibiotic for the entire time prescribed by your doctor - even if your symptoms disappear. If you stop the medication too soon, you run the risk of a relapse. Also, be sure to follow your doctor's instructions for taking a antibiotic with meals and other medications.

Your doctor might also tell you:

- Stay in bed, especially if you have fever, pain, or difficulty breathing.
- Drink plenty of fluids each day - such as water, tea, or juice - to make it easier to cough up lung secretions
- Take acetaminophen (such as Tylenol) to relieve minor pain
- Use a cool mist humidifier to add moisture to the air
- Stop smoking

SYMPTOMS

- Cough with or without mucus
- Chest pain
- Fever
- Muscle Soreness
- Headache
- Chills
- Shortness of Breath
- Weakness

