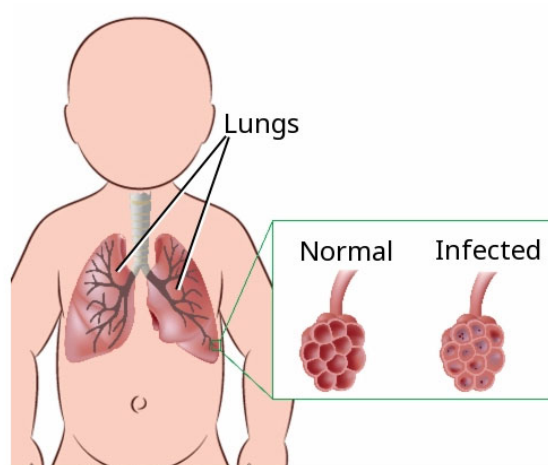


Community-Acquired Pneumonia, Infant

Pneumonia is a type of lung infection that causes swelling in the airways of the lungs. Mucus and fluid may also build up inside the airways. This may cause coughing and difficulty breathing. Babies with pneumonia may need to be treated in the hospital.

There are different types of pneumonia. One type can develop while a person is in a hospital. A different type, called community-acquired pneumonia, develops in people who are not, or have not recently been, in the hospital or other health care facility.



What are the causes?

This condition may be caused by:

- Viruses. This is the most common cause of pneumonia.
- Bacteria.
- Fungal infections. This is the least common cause of pneumonia.

What increases the risk?

Your baby is more likely to develop this condition if he or she:

- Has other lung problems.
- Has a weak disease-fighting (*immune*) system.
- Is being treated for cancer.
- Is in close contact with sick children, especially during the fall and winter seasons.
- Is being treated for gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD).

Babies born to mothers who have an untreated sexually transmitted infection (STI) called chlamydia are also at higher risk for developing pneumonia after birth.

What are the signs or symptoms?

Symptoms of this condition may include:

- Coughing.
- Rapid breathing.
- Noisy breathing.
- Having trouble breathing.
- Widening (*flaring*) of the nostrils while breathing.
- Fever.
- Poor appetite.
- Difficulty nursing or taking a bottle.
- Being less active and sleeping more than usual.

How is this diagnosed?

This condition may be diagnosed by:

- A physical exam.
- Your baby's medical history.
- Measuring the oxygen in your baby's blood.
- Imaging studies of your baby's chest, including X-rays.
- Other tests on blood, mucus (*sputum*), fluid around your baby's lungs (*pleural fluid*), and urine.

How is this treated?

Treatment for this condition depends on the kind of pneumonia your baby has and the severity of the condition.

- Viral pneumonia usually goes away with no specific treatment. In severe cases, your baby may be treated with antiviral medicine.
- Bacterial pneumonia is treated with an antibiotic medicine.
- If your baby is having trouble breathing, treatment will take place in the hospital. Treatment in the hospital may include:
 - Breathing treatment to help your child breathe better.
 - Oxygen treatments. This may include placing a tube down your baby's throat to help in breathing with a machine.
 - Medicine to treat the infection and reduce fever or other symptoms such as runny nose or cough.
 - IV fluids for hydration.

Follow these instructions at home:

Medicines

- Give your baby over-the-counter and prescription medicines only as told by his or her health care provider.
- **Do not** give your baby cough or cold medicines unless directed to do so by his or her health care provider. Cough medicine can prevent your baby's natural ability to remove mucus from the lungs.
- If your baby was prescribed an antibiotic medicine, give it as told by the health care provider. **Do not** stop giving the antibiotic even if your baby starts to feel better.

Clearing your baby's mucus

- Ask your baby's health care provider how you should help clear your baby's mucus. This may include:
 - Using a vaporizer or humidifier, which can loosen mucus.
 - Using a bulb syringe or other tool to suction the mucus from your baby's nose.
 - Using saline drops to loosen thick nasal mucus.
 - Cleaning your baby's nose gently with a moist, soft cloth.

Eating and drinking

- Continue to breastfeed or bottle-feed your young child. Do this in small amounts and frequently. Gradually increase the amount. **Do not** give extra water to your infant.
- Have your baby drink enough fluid to keep his or her urine clear or pale yellow. Ask your baby's health care provider how much your baby should drink each day.

General instructions

- Wash your hands before and after you handle your baby to prevent the spread of infection.
- **Do not** smoke around your baby. If you do smoke, make sure you smoke outside only and change clothes afterwards.
- Keep all follow-up visits as told by your baby's health care provider. This is important.



How is this prevented?

- Vaccination against common bacteria that cause pneumonia is one of the best ways to prevent your baby from getting pneumonia in the future.
- Your baby should get the flu vaccine yearly after he or she is 6 months old.
- Make sure that you and all of the people who provide care for your child have received vaccines for the flu (*influenza*) and whooping cough (*pertussis*).
- Wash your hands often. Ask other people in the household to wash their hands, too.
- If your child is younger than 6 months, feed your baby with breast milk only if possible. Continue to breastfeed exclusively until your baby is at least 6 months old. Breast milk can help your child fight infections.

Contact a health care provider if:

- Your baby is having trouble feeding.
- Your baby is passing less stool or urine than normal.
- Your baby is unable to sleep or sleeps too much.
- Your baby is very fussy.
- Your baby has a fever.

Get help right away if:

- Your baby has trouble breathing. This includes:
 - Rapid breathing.
 - A grunting sound when breathing out.
 - Sucking in of the spaces between and under the ribs.
 - A high-pitched noise (*wheezing*) while breathing out or in.
 - Flaring of the nostrils.
 - Blue lips.
 - A temporary stop in breathing during or after coughing.
- Your baby coughs up blood.
- Your baby who is younger than 3 months has a fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher.

Summary

- Pneumonia is a type of lung infection that causes swelling in the airways of the lungs.
- Viruses are the most common cause of pneumonia.
- Treatment for this condition depends on the kind of pneumonia your baby has and the severity of the condition.
- Getting flu shots and other vaccines that are suitable for the child's age, breastfeeding your baby, as well as hand washing, are the best ways to prevent pneumonia.

This information is not intended to replace advice given to you by your health care provider. Make sure you discuss any questions you have with your health care provider.