



Identifying and Preventing Pneumonia

Pneumonia is an infection in the lungs. In people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), many unplanned hospitalizations are related to pneumonia. Most people who get pneumonia recover within a few weeks, but it can be life-threatening. Contact your doctor when you think you might have pneumonia.

What is Pneumonia?

Pneumonia is an infection of the lungs. The air sacs in the lungs may fill with fluid or pus. This can cause coughing, fever, chills, and difficulty breathing. It is important to know the signs and symptoms of pneumonia so you can get the right medical attention. If you think you have pneumonia, you should contact your doctor as soon as possible!

Source: [CDC](#); [NHLBI](#)

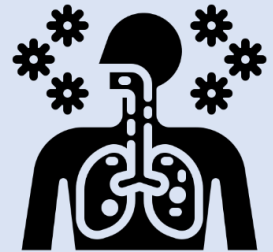
You may have pneumonia and not feel very sick.

Pneumonia can be contagious and can infect anyone, especially babies, young children, older adults and people with other health problems.

What are the Symptoms of Pneumonia?

- Chest pain when breathing or coughing
- Feeling very tired or very weak
- Fever, chills and sweating
- Coughing up bloody or green mucus
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
- Shortness of breath or fast breathing
- Fast heartbeat
- Loss of appetite, or
- Body pain.

Source: [CDC](#); [NHLBI](#)



Tips for Preventing and Treating Pneumonia

Prevention

- Ask your doctor about getting the **COVID-19 booster and pneumonia and flu vaccines**.
- Avoid people who are sick, and stay away from others if you are sick.
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces that are frequently touched, like doorknobs, light switches and remote controls.
- Don't smoke, and limit contact with cigarette smoke.
- Take care of existing health conditions like asthma, heart disease, periodontal disease, and diabetes.
- Practice proper oral care and see a dentist regularly.
- Sit upright while eating and take bites that you can easily chew and swallow. This helps prevent accidentally breathing in fluids or food.
- Here is a [link](#) to a helpful video about pneumonia and how you can prevent it.

Treatment

- Tell someone if you feel sick so that they can help you.
- If the doctor gives you medication, take the medication and finish it all, even if you feel better sooner.
- Get plenty of rest. Drink fluids. **Call 911 if you are in distress.**

Source: [NHLBI](#) & [DDS Clinical Services](#)



Wellness and Safety Bulletins are produced by the Department of Developmental Services to alert individuals, families, and others to specific risks identified with our community.

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