

2014

Pneumonia

Pneumonia

Pneumonia is inflammation or infection in one or both of the lungs (sometimes called a chest infection). Pneumonia can be caused by viruses or bacteria. Viruses are the most common cause of pneumonia.

Pneumonia can be treated at home. It is important for you to read this pamphlet and follow the care plan given.

Signs and symptoms of pneumonia

It is possible to have more than one symptom

- High fever
- Fast and/or difficult breathing, feeling short of breath
- Cough
- Coughing up yellow, white, green, or rust coloured sputum (mucous)
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Irritable or more tired than usual
- Pain in the chest, especially when coughing
- Rapid pulse (fast heartbeat)

Risk factors for pneumonia

- Smoking
- Head cold or throat infection
- Poor diet
- Chronic diseases such as asthma or C.O.P.D.
- Any illness that may lower your body's ability to fight infection
- Medications that lower your body's ability to fight infection
- Age (very old and very young)
- Alcohol abuse
- Previous pneumonia

How will your pneumonia be treated?

Antibiotic pills may be prescribed for you. It is important that you **take all** of your antibiotic pills **even if you start to feel better.**

Below are your instructions

1. Medications prescribed: _____

2. Continue routine medications: _____

At home

- Rest as much as possible.
- Drink **plenty** of fluids (if you are not on a restricted fluid diet).
- Turn often in bed, every hour while you are awake, and take deep breaths 5-10 times followed by 1-2 coughs.
- Throw away used tissues promptly and wash your hands well. Cover your mouth and nose when coughing.
- Stop smoking.
- **Make a follow-up appointment with your doctor within 5-7 days.** Your doctor may want an X-ray at 6 weeks to check the status of your pneumonia.
- Get a flu vaccine.

How will I feel?

- You will feel unwell, weak and tired, with a poor appetite. You may need help with your daily activities.
- In **3-5 days** you will start to feel a bit better, your appetite will get better, and your fever will go down.
- In **5-7 days** you will feel better and your appetite will return to normal. Your energy will increase. Fever should be gone and breathing will be improved.
- It can take up to 3 months for the elderly to fully recover.

Call your family doctor or return to the Emergency Department if you experience any of the following:

- Your fever has not gone down in 3-5 days
- More difficulty breathing
- Coughing up blood
- Cough does not improve in 5-7 days or you are not feeling better in 3-5 days

If you have any questions, please ask.
We are here to help you.

Looking for more health information?

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.
For more information go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

*Capital Health promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.
Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!*

Capital Health, Nova Scotia
www.cdha.nshealth.ca

Prepared by: Emergency Services
Designed by: Capital Health Library Services, Patient Education Team
Printed by: Dalhousie University Print Centre

The information in this brochure is provided for informational and educational purposes only.
The information is not intended to be and does not constitute healthcare or medical advice.
If you have any questions, please ask your healthcare provider.