

Pneumonia in Children

Pneumonia is an infection in the lungs. A germ such as bacteria, virus, fungus or parasite can cause it. When a child gets pneumonia, tiny air sacs in the lungs can fill with fluid. This fluid blocks the air sacs and oxygen cannot get to the body from the lungs.

Signs of Pneumonia

- Chills
- Fever
- Chest Pain
- Cough with yellow or green mucus
- Feeling very tired
- Trouble breathing or fast breathing
- Poor appetite or poor breast or bottle feeding

Your Child's Care

Your child's doctor will listen to your child's lungs. Your child may have a chest x-ray and a sample of his or her mucus checked for germs. This is called a sputum culture.

- Your child's doctor may order antibiotics as pills or in an IV (intravenous). Give the pills as directed. Be sure to give **all** of the medicine, even if your child feels well.
- Your child may be given medicine to ease chest pain or coughing. Give the medicine as directed.
- Oxygen may be given as a part of your child's care.
- Your child's doctor may ask him or her to cough and deep breathe every 2 hours while awake to remove mucus. Have your child spit any mucus coughed up into a tissue and throw it away. Do not let your child swallow mucus if possible.
- Make sure your child gets plenty of rest.
- Have your child drink water. Ask your child's doctor how much to give.
- Keep all appointments with your child's doctor. Follow up with your child's doctor within 7 days, **even if your child is feeling better.**

To prevent pneumonia:

- Teach your children to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet.
- Keep your children away from people who are smoking.
- Make sure your children get all of their vaccines or shots. To limit your children's risk of pneumonia, have them get a flu shot every fall. You can get pneumonia from the flu.
- Make sure your children are eating a healthy diet that includes fruits, vegetables and whole grain foods.
- Make sure your children are getting plenty of sleep.

Call your child's doctor **right away** if your child has:

- Chest pain when he or she breathes
- Long coughing spells
- Trouble breathing or fast breathing
- Nausea and vomiting
- A high fever that comes on quickly or a fever that lasts more than 1 to 2 days
- Confusion

Talk to your doctor or nurse if you have any questions or concerns.

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