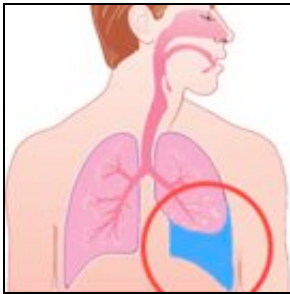


# Pneumonia



Pneumonia is an infection that makes the tiny air sacs in your lungs inflamed (swollen and sore).



They then fill with liquid.



People with mild (not so bad) pneumonia can usually be treated at home.



People with severe (serious) pneumonia may need to have treatment in hospital.



You are more likely to have to have hospital treatment if you are:



- Young



- Old



- Have another health problem

# Symptoms of Pneumonia



The symptoms of pneumonia are similar to that of Acute Bronchitis (when your airways are very inflamed).



Both these diseases give you a cough that brings up phlegm (thick coloured mucus), and give you a high temperature.



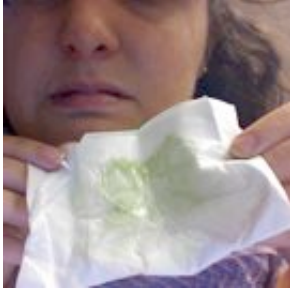
Pneumonia is more severe (serious).



Common symptoms of pneumonia are:



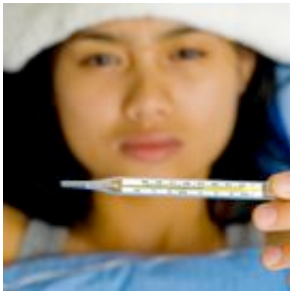
- Difficulty breathing - breaths are fast and short



- A cough that brings up phlegm (thick mucus)



- Rapid (fast) heart beat



- A severe fever (when your body temperature is over 38 C)



- Chest pain



Less common symptoms of pneumonia include:



- Coughing up blood



- Headaches



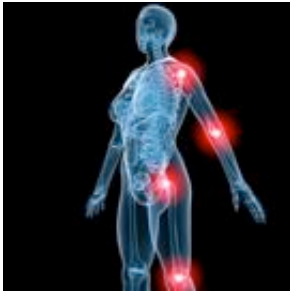
- Not feeling so hungry



- Fatigue (tiredness)



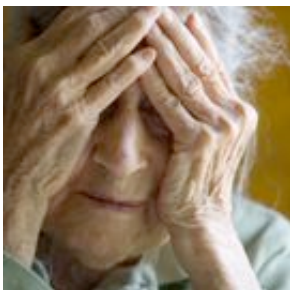
- Nausea (feeling sick) and vomiting (being sick)



- Joint and muscle pains



- Blueness of the skin



Sometimes, elderly people with pneumonia may become confused



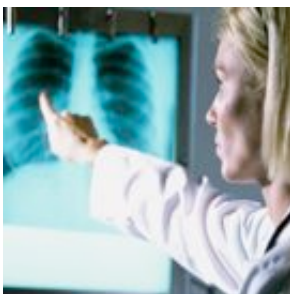
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# If I Have a Cough, at What Point Do I Go to the Doctor?



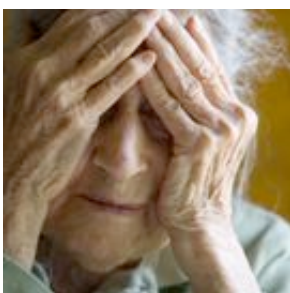
It is hard to work out if a cough is part of a simple cold, or if it has a more serious cause, like acute bronchitis or pneumonia.



You should see your doctor if you have a cough and any of these problems:



- You feel, or look, very unwell and cannot do your usual activities



- You are confused



- You have a temperature above 38C





- You are more breathless than usual



- You have a sharp pain in your chest when you breathe in



- You cough up blood stained phlegm (thick mucus)



- You have a cough that lasts longer than 3 weeks



- You have a long-term health problem, like diabetes or heart failure that causes breathlessness

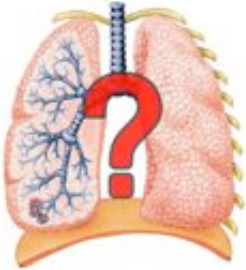




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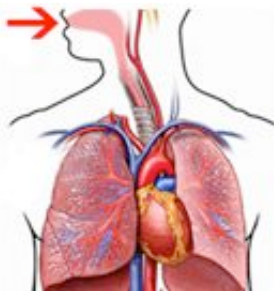
# Getting Pneumonia



How your lungs work



Your lungs are like two large sponges filled with tubes.



As you breathe air in, you suck oxygen through your nose and mouth into a tube in your neck.



Bacteria and viruses in the air can travel into your lungs.

Normally, you do not become ill, because your body kills the bacteria, or viruses.



However, sometimes an infection can get through.



Pneumonia is an infection of the lungs.

It makes it hard for you to breathe well.



Pneumonia can be very dangerous.

If the air sacs in your lungs fill with liquid, you will not be able to breathe.



Also, the infection can spread from your lungs into your blood, and then on to other parts of your body.



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# Diagnosis (Finding Out You Have pneumonia)



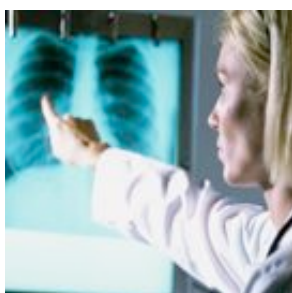
Your doctor will work out what infection you have by talking to you about your symptoms.



Your doctor will also listen to your chest and your breathing using a listening tool called a stethoscope to do this.



If the doctor hears crackling sounds with the stethoscope, this may mean that you have a lung infection, or pneumonia.



Your doctor may need to do more tests, like an x-ray.

This is to work out how bad your pneumonia is.



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# Treatment



If you have pneumonia, you may be treated at home or at hospital.

It depends how serious it is.



If your doctor thinks that your pneumonia could give you serious problems, you will need to go to hospital.



Pneumonia is normally treated with antibiotics (a type of medicine)



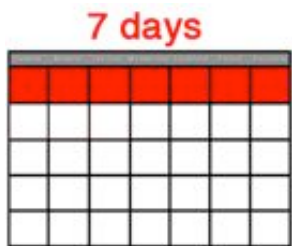
If your pneumonia is bad, the antibiotics will be given to you through a tube (a drip, straight into your vein) in hospital.



You may also be given oxygen to help your breathing.



**If your pneumonia is not bad**, you will probably take antibiotics by mouth.



You will normally be given enough tablets to last you 7 days.



It is important to finish all the tablets, even if you are feeling better.



If you stop taking the tablets too soon your pneumonia could come back.



If you are over 50 and a smoker, you should be given a chest X-ray.

This is because you have a bigger chance of getting lung cancer.



Anyone who has pneumonia should have an X-ray six weeks later.

This is to check that there are no more problems.



Things You Can Do To Make Yourself Feel Better:



- **Drink plenty of liquids (like water)**



- **Painkillers from the pharmacist** - like paracetamol and ibuprofen can help to lower your high temperature.



**Stop smoking** - if you smoke, it irritates your lungs and will make you cough more.





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# Complications



If you have serious pneumonia, you may get a sharp, stabbing pain in your chest when you breathe in.

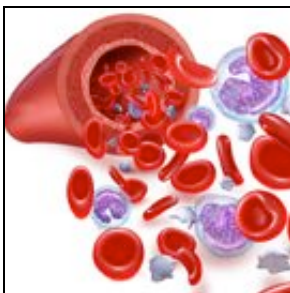


Sometimes liquid can build up in the space between your lungs and the wall of your chest.

This can get infected.



You will need to go hospital to get the liquid drained away (by a needle or thin tube).



If the infection from your lungs gets into your blood, it can give you a blood infection.



This can make you very ill.

You will need to stay in hospital so that you can have liquid antibiotics that go straight into your vein by a tube.



The number of people who die from Pneumonia is very small.



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# Making Sure You Do Not Get a Chest Infection



It is impossible to avoid bacteria or germs.



However, you can try and stay healthy by:



- Eating healthy food (lots of fruit and vegetables)



- Exercising



- Drinking lots of water



- Getting lots of sleep



- Not drinking too much tea and coffee



- Not drinking too much alcohol



## Flu Jabs



If you have had acute bronchitis, or pneumonia, your doctor may suggest you have a flu jab.

This should help you avoid these infections.



Flu jabs are normally suggested for the following people:



- People aged 65 years of age, or older



- People with either chronic breathing, heart, kidney, or liver conditions



- People with diabetes



- People with a disease called sickle-cell anaemia



- People with illnesses where their immune system are not so strong (when their bodies cannot fight infections so well), such as HIV



- Children under 5 years of age



## Hygiene



Make sure that you use a tissue when you cough, or sneeze.





Wash your hands regularly with soap.



Also, throw away used tissues straight away, and then wash your hands.



## **Stop Smoking**



If you are a smoker, the best thing you can do is to stop.

Smoking damages your lungs.

You won't be able to fight off infections so well.



If you would like to give up smoking, the NHS Smoking Helpline will be able to offer you advice and encouragement.

You can call 0800 169 0 169, or visit the 'Go smokefree' website at [www.smokefree.nhs.uk](http://www.smokefree.nhs.uk)



Your Doctor, or Pharmacist, will also be able to provide you with help and advice.



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