



# QUESTIONS QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ANSWERS

## Pneumonia

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**Pneumonia** (say: new-mo-ne-ya) is a lung infection. The job of the lungs is to supply oxygen to the blood. The lungs also rid the body of carbon dioxide. The lungs fill with fluid during a pneumonia infection. They cannot do their job as well.

### Signs

- A bad cough
- Shortness of breath
- Fever
- Chills
- Coughing up mucus from the lungs. The color of the mucus may be yellow, greenish or rusty.
- Weakness

### Causes

- Many different germs can cause pneumonia. These germs are either bacteria or viruses.
- Allergic reactions
- Breathing in certain chemicals

### Treatment

Pneumonia can turn into a serious illness. It is important to see your doctor if you have any of the signs listed above. Your doctor can decide on the best treatment for you. Your treatment depends on the cause of your pneumonia.

- **Antibiotics** are used if the cause is **bacteria**.
  - **Bed rest and lots of fluids** is the treatment for pneumonia caused by a **virus**.
  - Antibiotics do not work on viruses.
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- In a very bad case, a person may have to go to the hospital.

### **How to Prevent Pneumonia**

People often get pneumonia after getting the flu. So, getting a flu shot every year is a good way to prevent pneumonia. There is also a **shot for pneumonia**. This shot is usually given to people at high risk for getting pneumonia. These are people who:

- are 50 years or older
- live in nursing homes
- have long-term health problems
- cannot fight off infection (have a weak immune system)
- are pregnant

People over 65 who never had the pneumonia shot should get it only once. People between 18 and 65 years should get one shot and then get another shot after age 65. Check with your doctor to see if you should have a shot for pneumonia.

### **Where Can I Find More Information on Pneumonia?**

American Lung Association  
216-524-5864  
[www.lungsusa.org](http://www.lungsusa.org)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

American Association for Respiratory Care  
[www.aarc.org](http://www.aarc.org)

### **How can I find a Doctor?**

St. Vincent Charity Hospital has doctors who have special training in treating pneumonia. To contact one of our doctors call the:

**Physician Referral Line** at 1-800-223-8662

Visit our Web site at [www.stvincentcharity.com](http://www.stvincentcharity.com)

Our doctors serve with a deep respect for all. Their goal is to give the best care and education whether or not a person can pay.

**St. Vincent Charity Hospital**

2351 E. 22<sup>nd</sup> Street

Cleveland, Ohio 44115

216-861-6200

TTY: Ohio Relay 1-800-750-0750

**St. Luke's Health Care Center**

11201 Shaker Boulevard

Cleveland, Ohio 44104

216-721-6900

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