

# What is Pneumonia?

Pneumonia (nu-mo ne-a) is an inflammation (swelling) of the air sacs in the lungs. Many things can cause this illness. Usually it is due to germs.

## Symptoms:

The most common are:

- cough
- fever
- chills
- trouble breathing

## Sometimes, people will have:

- upset stomach (nausea)
- diarrhea
- chest pain

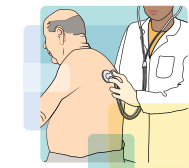
## Less often, people will have

- fatigue, poor appetite, but no cough or fever. Signs can come on fast, or can get worse over time. At times, a person with a virus, like a cold, can get a new fever or start to feel worse. This could mean there is a new problem caused by germs. People who start out with a cold or the flu can get pneumonia in this way.

## Medical Tests

Your doctor will think about your signs and do an exam. They may also do:

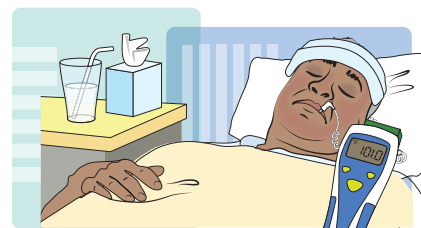
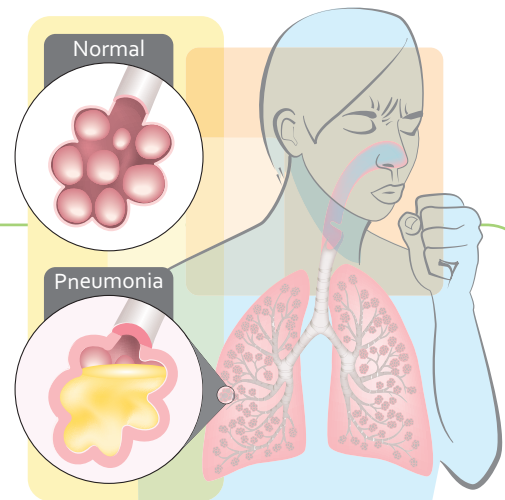
- chest x-ray
- CT (“cat”) scan
- sputum (phlegm/mucus) tests
- other tests, if needed



## Treatment:

- It can be hard to know what is causing your illness, even with testing. Your doctor will treat you with medicines (antibiotics or antivirals) that are likely to work for you.
- With this illness, you may need to take medicines, rest often, and drink plenty of fluids. Many people are able to recover at home. Some people who are very sick may need to stay in the hospital and get other treatments, such as oxygen or even be on a breathing machine until they can breathe well on their own.

To learn more, go to ATS at [www.thoracic.org/patients](http://www.thoracic.org/patients) or CDC at <http://www.cdc.gov/pneumonia/index.html>



## Call the doctor or clinic if:

- Your cough is very bad or getting worse
- You have a fever that is not going away
- You have a hard time breathing
- You do not feel better after antibiotics are completed

## Seek help right away if:

- You have a hard time breathing
- You have severe chest pain
- Your fingertips are a bluish color
- You cough up blood



## Tips to help you get better faster:

- Take all doses of your medicine, even if you start to feel better in a few days
- Do not skip doses of your medicine.
- Do not save medicine or give it to someone else
- Rest, but do not stay in bed all of the time. It is best to get up and move around to help clear your infection
- Drink plenty of liquids
- Do not smoke or vape

