



PEP TALK



PULMONARY EDUCATION PROGRAM LITTLE
OF MARY HOSPITAL

February 2019

The Signs of Pneumonia and How to Avoid Getting It

(By PERF Blog)

Pneumonia is an infection that inflames the air sacs in the lungs and causes a cough with phlegm or pus, fever, chills, and difficulty breathing. The disease can be mild or serious; even life-threatening.

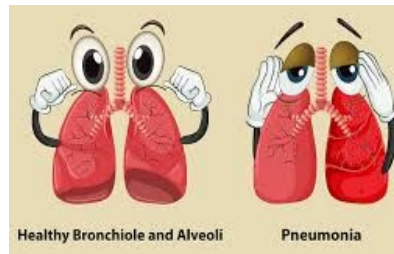
What Are the Signs That You Have Pneumonia as Opposed to a Cold or Flu?

Mild pneumonia may cause symptoms that are much like a cold or flu, but they last longer. Other more recognizable symptoms of pneumonia include:

- Chest pain with coughing
- Confusion
- A cough that produces phlegm
- Fatigue
- Fever, sweats, and chills
- Lower than normal body temperature
- Persistent fever above 102 degrees
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Shortness of breath

If you're experiencing any of these symptoms, you should see a doctor, especially if

you're over 65, or have an underlying health condition or weakened immune system.



What Causes Pneumonia?

You can develop pneumonia from a number of places and from various germs. Out in the community, you can be infected with a bacteria such as *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, or a bacteria-like organism such as *Mycoplasma pneumoniae*. Fungi from soil or bird droppings can also cause pneumonia to develop, especially in people with chronic health problems or weakened immune systems. Finally, viruses such as those that cause colds and flu can also cause pneumonia. Pneumonia contracted in hospitals or long-term health care facilities can be particularly dangerous, because the organism causing it may be resistant to antibiotics. The fact that you're hospitalized or receiving long-term care can also raise the risk that your infection will

be more serious, since you're already sick.

Pneumonia can also develop from aspiration, i.e. inhaling food, drink, vomit, or saliva into your lungs. This can happen when something disturbs your normal gag reflex, like a brain injury, a swallowing problem, or the use of excessive amounts of alcohol or drugs.

Factors That Raise the Risk of Pneumonia

If you're 65 or older, you're at higher risk of pneumonia. This is a simple fact, no matter if you're fit and healthy.

If you also have COPD, asthma, or heart disease, your susceptibility to pneumonia is higher.

Smoking increases your risk of getting pneumonia because it damages your body's natural defenses against bacteria and viruses.

If you have a weakened or suppressed immune system, you're more susceptible too. This in-

(Continued on page 2)

cludes people who have HIV/AIDS or receive chemotherapy or long-term steroids or who've had an organ transplant.

Being hospitalized can raise your risk of contracting pneumonia, especially if you're on a ventilator to help you breathe.

It's Not Just Pneumonia Itself That's Dangerous; It's the Potential Complications

Even if you receive treatment for pneumonia, you're at risk for developing these complications, especially if you're in a high-risk group:

- Bacteria in the bloodstream, which can spread the infection to other organs in your body.
- Breathing problems. If you have an underlying condition such as COPD, pneumonia can make your breathing even more difficult.
- Fluid build-up in or around the lungs. If this happens and the fluid becomes infected, you may have to have the fluid drained through a chest tube, or even surgery.
- Pus could form in a cavity of the lung, creating an abscess. This might be successfully treated with antibiotics, but sometimes surgery or drainage is needed to remove the pus.

How to Prevent Pneumonia

The first line of defense begins with your lifestyle habits: get enough sleep, eat nutritious foods, and exercise regularly.

Being healthy and fit makes you less susceptible to disease. Here are three more important steps to take:

- Don't smoke.
- Wash your hands often, or use a hand sanitizer.
- Get a pneumonia vaccine.

PF Campaign

(By Valeria Hatcher)

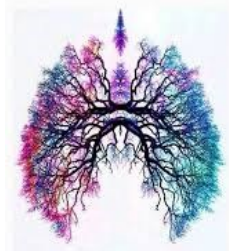
Hello PF friends. I hope your holidays were full of fun and frivolity.

Mine certainly were. I wanted to let you know

that The Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation has a new awareness campaign called "Not Everyone Breathes Easy." The goal of the Not Everyone Breathes Easy campaign is to encourage those who may be at risk to speak with a physician about PF, and to help them discover the PFF and its vast resources.

Please spread the word about the new campaign and direct friends and family to learn more about the disease at: www.AboutPF.org. It gives vast amounts of information in graphics that makes understanding Pulmonary Fibrosis just a little bit easier. We can always use that!

I want to let you know that February is the Rare Disease month and Thursday, February 28 is Rare Disease Day. This is an opportunity for us to make more people aware of not only our disease but 7,000 other rare dis-



eases that gravely affect not only adults but children too. For more information please go to www.rarediseases.org

Lastly don't forget about the PFF Summit in San Antonio, November 7-9, 2019 at the JW Marriott San Antonio Hill Country, 23808 Resort Parkway, San Antonio, TX 78261 Phone: 210 276 2500.

You take
my breath away.



February Babies

4 Gene Yeomans	13 Ed Pennebaker
6 Mike Brudnicki	14 Dan Buck
8 Yvonne Koga	19 Phyllis Tarrant
12 Fin Martin	21 Doy (Skip) Herrin
12 Brenda Tenort	23 Adonna Bowman
12 Marianne Williams	28 Ron Meier
13 Maureen Anderson	

PEP PIONEERS is a non-profit corporation comprised of graduates of the Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program at Providence Little Company of Mary Hospital. We are dependent on private donations and fundraisers to finance events and purchase equipment that benefit all of its members. Tax Deductible donations may be made to:

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