

Treatment for Pneumococcal disease

If a person becomes unwell and has signs and symptoms similar to the previous image, they will need urgent medical attention.

Antibiotics are the main treatment as this disease can spread throughout the body quickly. Sometimes there may be side effects from the antibiotics given, speak with your doctor to find out more.

Are there vaccinations to prevent it?

There are vaccinations to help reduce pneumococcal disease. However there are over 80 different strains of Streptococcus Pneumoniae and these vaccinations do not cover all strains, although they do cover the most common types.

- Pneumococcal – FREE Prevenar 13 vaccine for all 2, 4, 6 (ATSI babies), 12 months, 4 years (ATSI children – WA, NT, SA, Qld), and all 70+ years (50+ years for medically at risk, ATSI people).



For further information
about meningitis visit:
meningitis.com.au



**MENINGITIS
CENTRE
AUSTRALIA**

*Raising awareness.
Every second counts.*

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Disclaimer: Meningitis Centre Australia is a 'not for profit' organisation based in Australia, not a professional medical authority. Meningitis Centre Australia's literature provides general information about meningitis, not medical advice. Please consult your doctor to discuss the information or if you are concerned someone may be ill.
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Pneumococcal Disease

Pneumonia and Pneumococcal Meningitis

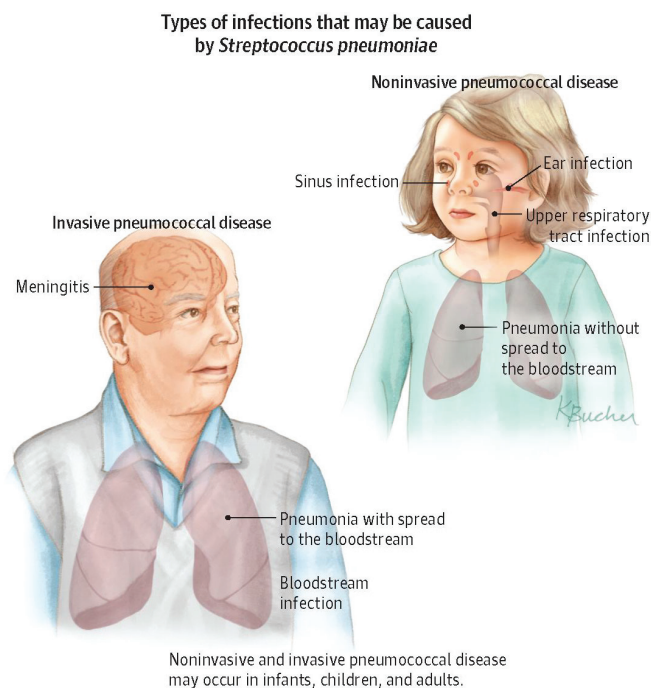


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What is Pneumococcal disease?

Pneumococcal disease is an illness caused by a bacteria known as *Streptococcus pneumoniae*.

This bacterium lies in the back of the nose and throat often sitting there harmlessly in healthy people. But if the germs spread to other parts of the body it can cause serious illnesses like Sinusitis, middle ear infection, blood infection, Septic arthritis, infection of the bone, Pneumonia or Pneumococcal meningitis.



How is it spread?

The bacteria spread when someone sneezes or coughs in close proximity to another person. You can also get it through kissing or from germs left on toys or living in cramped conditions.

The bacteria can enter the body and people begin to feel unwell.

It generally occurs during winter months in Australia, although this is not always the case.

What is Pneumococcal meningitis?

The most serious form of Invasive Pneumococcal disease is when the pneumococcus infects the cerebrospinal fluid and travels up to the lining of the brain called the meninges, causing meningitis. This can lead to disability, hearing loss, epilepsy, cerebral palsy, developmental delays, other neurological disorders, repeated ear or nose infections or death.

What is Pneumonia?

Pneumonia is an infection that inflames the air sacs in one or both lungs. The air sacs may fill with fluid causing coughing, phlegm or pus, fever, chills, and difficulty breathing. A variety of organisms, including bacteria, viruses and fungi, can cause pneumonia.

Who is mostly at risk?

- Children under the age of 2 years
- Seniors and the elderly
- Smokers
- People with respiratory disorders
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
- People with chronic illnesses like diabetes, heart, lung or kidney disease
- People without a spleen or where the spleen does not work properly
- Immuno deficient people (eg: those with HIV)
- Cochlear Implant recipients

Signs and symptoms

	Babies	Children & Adults
Fever, cold hands and feet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Vomiting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Tired/floppy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Blank expression	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Dislikes being handled	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Rapid breathing/grunting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Pale blotchy skin/spots/rash	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Unusual crying/refuses to feed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Bulging soft spot on top of head	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stiff neck/dislikes bright lights	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Severe headache	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Fitting/stiff jerking movements	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

These are common symptoms and can appear in any order. Some may not appear at all. Don't wait for a rash. **If concerned, see a doctor immediately.**

How serious is a Pneumococcal infection?

It is the leading cause of serious illness in Australian children under two years of age and people 65 years and older. The rates are higher for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

There are 90 different strains of *Streptococcus pneumoniae* and vaccines do not protect against all of them.

Pneumococcal infection can lead to a middle ear infection and may cause pneumonia, meningitis and septicaemia (infection of the blood).