

PNEUMONIA PATIENT GUIDE



What is Pneumonia?

Pneumonia is an infection of the lungs. When you have pneumonia, one or both of your lungs become inflamed and fill with pus and other liquids. This makes it hard for the oxygen in your lungs to reach your blood. Since your body needs oxygen to work properly, you become short of breath.

What Are The Signs and Symptoms of Pneumonia?

You may have some or all of these symptoms:

- Chest pain
- Weakness
- Chills
- Cough (sticky mucous possible)
- Fever (temperature greater than 38°C or 101.4°F)
- Tiredness
- Loss of appetite
- Muscle aches
- Shortness of breath

How Do We Test for Pneumonia?

Chest X-Ray: Will allow your doctor to see your lungs. It can also show how severe the pneumonia is.

Blood Tests: Will show if you have an infection in your blood. Blood tests can also show us what type of bacteria is causing your infection.

What Can I Expect While at The Hospital?

Length of stay in hospital: approximately 4 days

While you are at the hospital, you will meet with your doctor and nurse. Other members of your care team may include a nurse practitioner,

dietitian, physiotherapist, respiratory therapist, pharmacist, social worker, occupational therapist and/or speech language pathologist.

We will check your temperature, blood pressure, breathing rate and oxygen levels.

We may need to give you oxygen, antibiotic(s) and other medicine(s). Provide your doctor with a list of your current medicine(s) and tell him/her about any allergies you have.

Ask your nurse how much fluid you should drink.

Discuss with your team how you can stay active while in hospital.

Wash your hands frequently and follow the instructions provided to you.

What Are the Treatments for Pneumonia?

Eating a proper diet and staying hydrated is important. We may also give you:

- Intravenous fluids (fluids we give you through your veins)
- Medication to help fight the infection (antibiotics)
- Medication to help treat your fever and pain
- Deep breathing and coughing exercises

What Can I Expect at Discharge?

You and your health care team will work together to plan your return home.

Please arrange for someone to be pick you up **BEFORE 10:00 AM** on the day you leave the hospital.

If you need oxygen at home, a respiratory therapist will visit you there.

We may refer you to the Community Care Access Center's (CCAC) Rapid Response Nursing Program. Within 24 hours of leaving the hospital, a nurse will visit you at home, if needed.

We will give you an updated list of your medications. It is important to:

- Know the name of your medicine(s)
- Understand why you are taking your medicine(s)
- Take all your medicine(s) even if you feel better

Remember to make an appointment to see your family doctor or nurse practitioner within 7 days of leaving the hospital. If you did not receive an appointment upon discharge, take your discharge summary, medicine(s) to this visit, and discuss the need for another chest x-ray to be taken in 4-6 weeks.

Appointment with Your Family Doctor or Nurse Practitioner

Date: _____

Time: _____

Or call your family doctor or nurse practitioner
on _____ to book an appointment.

I Still Don't Feel Well after Getting Home

You should return to your family doctor or nurse practitioner if you experience:

- Ongoing fever for more than 72 hours
- Increasing shortness of breath
- Mucous that changes from clear to a yellow or greenish colour

How Can I Prevent Infection and Stay Healthy?

1. Get the flu vaccine every year.
2. Ask your family doctor about the need for the pneumonia vaccine.
3. If you smoke, please stop. There are programs that can help you stop smoking.

4. If you are sick, monitor your symptoms every day.
5. If your symptoms get worse, see your family doctor or nurse practitioner.
6. Eat a balanced diet, exercise regularly, and see your dentist often.
7. To learn about your medications, you can go to www.ontario.ca/medscheck or speak with your pharmacist.

Community Support

Health resources in your area: www.eriestclairhealthline.ca

Central Community Care Access Centre (CCAC)

www.healthcareathome.ca/eriestclair or 1-888-310-2222

Telehealth Ontario

1-866-797-0000

Ontario Lung Association

www.lung.ca or 1-888-344-5864

Smokers' Help Line

www.smokershelpline.ca or 1-877-513 5333



www.bluewaterhealth.ca

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