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# Children's Services – Information for parents

## Pneumonia

### What is pneumonia?

Pneumonia is an acute infection of the lungs, which causes inflammation and consolidation.

### What causes pneumonia?

Pneumonia may be caused either by bacterial (30%) or viral (70%) infection.

### Who is most likely to get pneumonia?

Pneumonia may occur at any age throughout life.

### How is the diagnosis of pneumonia made?

In order to make a diagnosis of pneumonia, a full history is taken by the doctor, looking for the following signs and symptoms:

- Very high fever
- Fast breathing
- Difficulty with breathing
- Dry cough
- Fast heart rate
- Pallor and listlessness
- Crackly noises when the chest is listened to using a stethoscope

### Will any tests be carried out?

If pneumonia is suspected, the following investigations may help with the diagnosis:

- Chest x-ray
- Blood tests

### What medical treatment might your child receive for pneumonia?

- Oxygen – this may be given via a facemask, or through a fine tube into the nose.
- Antibiotics may be given into a vein (a 'drip') and then by mouth following discharge from hospital.

- Physiotherapy – usually given twice a day, to help your child to cough up phlegm. The frequency of this will be directed by medical staff.
- Offer your child their favourite drink in small, frequent amounts, to keep her/him well hydrated.

## **When should you seek medical help following discharge?**

Your child will only be discharged from hospital when he/she is considered well enough, and no longer requiring oxygen. They will usually be sent home with antibiotics – it is important that they finish the prescribed course. If your child does not seem to be improving following discharge take her/him to see your GP.

## **Will my child have any long-term problems?**

Pneumonia is an acute infection of the lungs and children usually recover quickly with treatment. However, they may be tired and off their food for a few weeks following the infection.

Pneumonia does not usually result in any long-term chest problems.

**Name of child:**

**Date of hospital admission:**

**Treatment discharged on:**

**Outpatient follow-up appointment:**

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to ask the nursing staff.

**If you are at all concerned about your child, please contact:**

**Ward .....**

**Tel: 01223 .....**



We are currently working towards a smoke-free site. Smoking is only permitted in the designated smoking areas.

For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS Stop Smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169

## Help with this leaflet:



If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio format, please ask the department to contact Patient Information: 01223 216032 or

[patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)



## Document history

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