What Is Pneumonia?

Pneumonia is an infection of one or both of the lungs caused by bacteria, viruses or fungi. It is a serious infection in which the air sacs in your lungs fill with pus and other liquid.

Types of Pneumonia

- Lobar pneumonia affects one or more sections (lobes) of the lungs.
- Bronchial pneumonia affects patches throughout both lungs. It is also called bronchopneumonia.

Who is at risk for pneumonia?

Anyone can get pneumonia, but the following groups are at the highest risk:

- Adults ages 65 years or older
- People with certain health conditions
- People who smoke or use vaping devices

Preventing pneumonia

- Get a pneumonia vaccine. The vaccine is recommended for children younger than 2 years old, adults 65 years or older or those with certain medical conditions.
- Get an annual flu vaccine.
- Stop smoking.
- Ensure your home is free of mold.
- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly.
- Drink plenty of fluids to help loosen secretions and bring up phlegm (mucus).
- Drink warm beverages, take steamy baths and use a humidifier to help open your airways and ease your breathing. Contact your doctor right away if your breathing gets worse instead of better over time.
- If given antibiotics to treat your pneumonia, make sure to finish the prescription.

What are the symptoms of pneumonia?

- Bluish color to lips and fingernails
- Confused mental state or delirium, especially in older people
- Cough that produces green, yellow or bloody mucus
- Fever
- Loss of appetite
- Low energy and extreme tiredness (fatigue)
- Rapid pulse
- Shaking chills
- Sharp or stabbing chest pain that's worse with deep breathing or coughing
- Shortness of breath that gets worse with activity

Novant Health programs and support services

- Your provider can follow your progress. Visit NovantHealth.org to learn more about our practices and find the clinic location most convenient for you.
- **Stop smoking:** Novant Health offers classes. Call 910-264-9200 for more information.
- **Transitional disease management support:** Patients discharging from Novant Health New Hanover Regional Medical Center with pneumonia who are at high risk for readmission may receive follow-up phone calls from a nurse and may receive a home visit from a community paramedic to help make a smooth transition back to living in your home. Call 910-667-7275 to reach the transitional disease management team.
- Walk-in and Urgent Care is available for any urgent medical needs. Visit **NovantHealth.org** to find the walk-in care location nearest you.
- VitaLine provides free, confidential access to non-urgent health information from experienced registered nurses and other professionally trained staff who can help connect you to the care you need. Call 888-815-5188 to reach the VitaLine team, who will follow up with you at their earliest convenience.

NewHanoverHealthAdvantage.com
Have a question about your health? Call our Nurse Line at 910-667-7275.

Additional references and resources

- American Lung Association: Learn more about pneumonia treatment and recovery at **lung.org/lung-health-diseases/lung-disease-lookup/pneumonia/treatment-and-recovery.**

New Hanover Health Advantage

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