
Community-Acquired Pneumonia (CAP)

What is community-acquired pneumonia?

Community-acquired pneumonia (CAP) is a respiratory tract infection that affects the general public. Anyone can get CAP. Community acquired pneumonia can be caused by many different organisms, some viral and some bacterial. Pneumonia affects the lungs, or lower respiratory tract, and can cause them to fill with fluid.

What are the symptoms of CAP?

Symptoms of community-acquired pneumonia can include:

- Lack of energy/fatigue
- Cough, especially one that brings up mucus
- Difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills

What is walking pneumonia?

Walking pneumonia is the term used to describe pneumonia that is not severe enough to require the patient to be bedridden or hospitalized.

How is community-acquired pneumonia diagnosed?

Diagnosis of pneumonia must be made by a healthcare provider. If the symptoms of the patient suggest pneumonia, a chest X-ray may be taken to look for fluid in the lungs.

What is the treatment for community-acquired pneumonia?

Generally, antibiotics will be prescribed for diagnoses of pneumonia caused by bacteria. Though not all pneumonias are caused by bacteria, it can be very difficult to tell which ones are caused by bacteria and which ones are caused by viruses.

What is Mycoplasma pneumoniae?

Mycoplasma pneumoniae is pneumonia caused by the *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* bacterium. It is just one of the many types of community-acquired pneumonia. In addition to the symptoms of CAP, mycoplasma pneumoniae may include nausea, vomiting, chest pain, excessive sweating, or skin lesions or rash.

What is Strep pneumoniae?

Strep pneumoniae is pneumonia caused by the bacterium *Streptococcus pneumoniae*. *Streptococcus pneumoniae* produces illness in people with a wide range of symptoms, most commonly eye, ear, and sinus infections, as well as pneumonia.

What is Chlamydia pneumoniae?

Chlamydia pneumoniae is caused by the bacterium *Chlamydia pneumoniae* and has nothing to do with sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). People with *C. pneumoniae* infection may also have bronchitis or sinus infection/symptoms. *C. pneumoniae* infection is treated with antibiotics.

What is *Haemophilus influenzae*?

Also called *H. influenzae*, *Haemophilus influenzae* is a bacterium that produces illness in people with a wide range of symptoms, most commonly ear, eye, and sinus infections, as well as pneumonia. *H. influenzae* has nothing to do with the flu, though it got its name because it was believed to be the cause of seasonal flu until 1933. It is treated with antibiotics.

For specific concerns about community-acquired pneumonia, call the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, Communicable Disease Control Section at 603-271-4496 or 800-852-3345 x4496. For further information, refer to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at www.cdc.gov.

How can community-acquired pneumonia be prevented?

The best steps people can take to reduce their chance of becoming ill and to help prevent the spread of CAP and other illnesses are:

- Wash hands frequently with warm water and soap, especially after using the bathroom, after changing diapers, after blowing your nose and before eating anything
- Practice cough etiquette, by coughing or sneezing into your elbow and discarding used tissues then washing your hands afterward
- Stay home from work or school if you are sick
- If you think you have the symptoms of community-acquired pneumonia, see your healthcare provider.