

This is the inflammation of the substance of the lungs.

### What to look for

- cough - either with phlegm or without it.
- fever (with pain on coughing or taking a deep breath occasionally)
- Loss of appetite and weight
- In children, laboured and rapid breathing, sudden onset of fever, cough, wheezing, and bluish skin are general signs of pneumonia.

Pneumonia is the relatively common inflammation caused by various viral, bacterial, and fungal infections.

In response, the lungs become congested with fluids and cells that leak from the affected tissue. There are generally three types :-

1. **Lobar Pneumonia** - if the inflammation is limited to one lobe of one lung;
2. **Bronchopneumonia** - inflammation spreading from the bronchi to other parts of one or both lungs.
3. **Double Pneumonia** - if both lungs are inflamed.

It usually lasts about 2 to 3 weeks, however you may feel fatigued for quite a few weeks after the condition has cleared.

Viral pneumonia is generally mild while bacterial pneumonia's are more complex and serious.

Pneumonia is a common complication of many illnesses, and like the common cold and flu, can be transmitted from one person to another.

### Causes

Viruses and bacteria normally cause this disease.

Pneumonia can be mild and treatable at home or you may need to be hospitalised, therefore it is vital that a doctor diagnose the condition.

### Traditional Treatment

It is imperative that the patient recover quickly as problems can occur if the disease remains for too long. All treatments include bed rest and ridding the body of any infections and phlegm in the lungs.

If you have a mild case of viral pneumonia, you can probably recover at home after getting a diagnosis from your doctor.

If you have bacterial pneumonia, your doctor may prescribe an antibiotic.

### Prevention

- Avoid smoking and exposure to tobacco smoke
- Don't drink large amounts of alcohol

### When to seek further professional advice

- your symptoms indicate you have any form of pneumonia