

Pneumococcal Disease



What is pneumococcal disease?

Pneumococcal disease is caused by pneumococcal bacteria *Streptococcus pneumoniae*. There are many types of pneumococcal bacteria. Certain strains cause severe disease like meningitis, sepsis (blood poisoning) and pneumonia.

How does it spread?

Pneumococcal bacteria are very common. Many people carry them in their nose and throat without getting sick. The bacteria spread from person to person through close contact with an infected person, droplets from coughs and sneezes, and touching objects that are contaminated.

Who is at risk?

Anyone can get pneumococcal disease but young children, especially those under age 2, and adults over age 65 are at an increased risk of pneumococcal disease. People living with chronic health conditions like asthma and diabetes are also at risk of pneumococcal disease. Susceptibility to pneumococcal disease is also increased in people who smoke, people who have alcohol or substance abuse disorders, and people who are homeless.

How can it be prevented?

Vaccination is available for the prevention of pneumococcal disease but may vary between provinces and territories. Talk with your healthcare provider about pneumococcal vaccination.

**Pneumonia
Awareness**

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