



Pneumococcal Disease

(INVASIVE PNEUMOCOCCAL DISEASE- IPD)

What is pneumococcal disease?

Pneumococcal disease is caused by infection with the bacteria *Streptococcus pneumoniae*. Pneumococcal infection can lead to; pneumonia (infection of the lungs), otitis media (infection of the middle ear) and meningitis (infection of the membranes around the brain and spinal cord).

Invasive pneumococcal disease (IPD) is a serious bacterial infection commonly associated with severe respiratory tract infections. It is one of the leading causes of illness, hospitalization, and death worldwide.

Who is at risk of pneumococcal infections?

In Canada, invasive pneumococcal disease is most common in the very young, individuals living with chronic illnesses or immune compromising conditions, individuals with certain lifestyle factors, and adults over 65 years of age. Close contacts of positive cases are usually not at increased risk of infection, and if a follow up is required, individuals will be contacted by Public Health.

If you are unsure if your medical condition puts you at high risk, contact your Primary Care Provider.

How is pneumococcal disease spread?

People spread pneumococcal bacteria to others through direct contact with respiratory secretions, like saliva or mucus. Many people, especially children, have the bacteria in their nose or throat at one time or another and don't get sick; however, the bacteria sometimes can cause an infection.

What are the symptoms?

Pneumococcal disease can include many different types of infections. Symptoms depend on the part of the body that is infected and the age of the person.

- Pneumonia can cause shortness of breath, fever, lack of energy, loss of appetite, headache, chest pain and cough.
- Otitis media. In children, can cause crying, tugging at the ear, fever, irritability, poor hearing, and sometimes diarrhea and vomiting.
- Meningitis can cause fever, headache, stiff neck, nausea, vomiting, and drowsiness.

A-Z DISEASE FACT SHEETS

How is pneumococcal disease diagnosed?

Early diagnosis is very important for serious pneumococcal infections. Your doctor or nurse practitioner can diagnose pneumococcal disease from the symptoms, doing an examination, and/or by doing some special tests. These tests may include a chest x-ray, and/or taking samples to look for the bacteria in the infected part of your body.

How is pneumococcal disease treated?

Treatment includes antibiotics, medicine to control the fever and pain, and fluids to prevent dehydration.

How can pneumococcal be prevented?

Vaccines are available to prevent many types of pneumococcal disease. The [New Brunswick Routine Immunization Schedule](#) provides pneumococcal vaccine against this disease for the following individuals:

- All children at age two months, four months and 12 months of age.
- Individuals aged 65 years and over, who have never previously received a pneumococcal vaccine.
- Individuals 18 years and over, newly admitted to long-term care facility.
- Any individuals (infants, children, and adults) who have specific health and environmental conditions that place them at greater risk of pneumococcal disease.

You can ask a healthcare provider to see if you are eligible for the vaccine.

What is the Public Health response?

Health-care providers and laboratories must report all cases of Invasive pneumococcal disease to Public Health. Public health staff will talk to the health-care provider and patient (or caregivers) to find out how the infection occurred, identify other people at risk of infection, suggest actions to help stop the spread (such as immunization) and provide other advice.

Further Information

For additional information, contact your health-care provider, Tele-Care 811, local Public Health office.

- Public Health Agency of Canada: [Invasive Pneumococcal Disease - Canada.ca](#)
- Public Health Agency of Canada: [Vaccines for children: About vaccines - Canada.ca](#)
- Public Health Agency of Canada: [Vaccination for adults - Canada.ca](#)
- Government of New Brunswick: [Pneumococcal Disease \(gnb.ca\)](#)

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