

PNEUMOCOCCAL INFECTIONS

Pneumococcal infections are the leading cause of serious illness among young children and are the most frequent cause of pneumonia, bacteremia, sinusitis, and acute otitis media (ear infections). Pneumococcus is also the most common cause of bacterial meningitis in infants and young children. Infected children can pass the illness on to other children and adults that live with them. Pneumococcus is commonly found in the upper respiratory tract of healthy people.

CAUSE: *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, a bacterium

SYMPTOMS: Sudden onset of shaking chill, fever, chest pain, difficulty breathing, and cough with possible rusty-colored sputum. In infants and young children fever, vomiting, and convulsions may be the first symptoms.

SPREAD: Person-to-person by droplets expelled during sneezing and coughing as well as direct contact with secretions from the nose and mouth. Spread also occurs from hands, tissues or other items soiled with nose and mouth secretions from an infected person.

INCUBATION: Unknown, probably 1 to 3 days.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD: Until 24 to 48 hours after effective treatment begins.



Exclusion

Until the child has been treated, fever is gone, and the child is well enough to participate in normal activities.



1. The CDC recommends children receive the pneumococcal vaccine (PVC7) to prevent invasive pneumococcal disease and pneumonia. Infants receiving their first PVC7 vaccine before or at 6 months of age should receive 3 doses at intervals of 2 months, followed by a 4th dose at 12 to 15 months. Children getting the vaccine for the first time after 6 months of age should receive 2 doses at intervals of 2 months and then a 3rd dose at 12 to 15 months. Healthy children 2 to 5 years of age should receive 1 dose.
2. Cover mouth when coughing and sneezing with a tissue, if possible.

3. Clean and sanitize mouthed toys at least daily and when soiled.



1. Bleach Sanitizer (Use non-scented)

- 1 teaspoons bleach in 1 gallon water
- 1/4 teaspoon bleach in 1 quart water

Use test strip to check concentration. Do not rinse. Air dry.

PREPARE FRESH SOLUTION DAILY.

OR

2. Commercial or food grade sanitizer that is EPA approved

FOLLOW MANUFACTURER'S DIRECTIONS.

4. Wash hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and running water for at least 20 seconds. If hand sanitizers are used, they may be used only after thorough handwashing.

5. Diagnosis/Treatment: Laboratory tests are used for diagnosis. Treatment is available.



For more information, you or your physician may call the Douglas County Health Department at 444-7241 or your local health department.