

What I Need to Know About Pneumonia

Pneumonia is a lung infection. Symptoms include fever, chills, sweats, cough, pain with breathing or coughing, and shortness of breath. You might also have a headache or feel tired. You might not feel like eating. Contact your prescriber right away if you have these symptoms.

If you have pneumonia, you will take one or two antibiotics. Your prescriber or pharmacist can fill in the antibiotic names, doses, and directions for you below. You will be taking:

Start taking the antibiotic as soon as possible. Don't miss doses. Ask what to do if you miss a dose.

Take the antibiotic until it is gone, even if you feel better. Your prescriber will probably want you to take your other medications as usual. If you have a chronic disease like diabetes, or lung or heart disease, keep it under good control.

Your prescriber might also want you to:

Drink fluids to avoid dehydration.

Avoid alcohol and cough and cold medicines.

Take deep breaths and cough at least each hour.

Use a humidifier to make warm, moist air.

Avoid smoking.

Rest. If resting in bed, turn over or get up at least every hour while awake.

Take acetaminophen (Tylenol, others), ibuprofen (Motrin IB, others), or naproxen (Aleve, others) for fever or pain.

Wash hands often and practice good hygiene.