

Pneumonia Prevention and Care

Pneumonia is a lung disease. Pneumococcal pneumonia can infect the upper respiratory tract and can spread to the blood, lungs, middle ear, or nervous system. Pneumococcal pneumonia mainly causes illness in children younger than 2 years old and adults 65 years of age or older. The elderly are especially at risk of becoming seriously ill and dying from this disease.

Can Pneumonia Be Prevented?

In the United States, approximately 2 million people develop pneumonia each year. It is the sixth most common cause of death overall, and the most common fatal infection acquired in hospitals.

The pneumococcal vaccine prevents pneumonia, is safe, and one shot lasts most people up to 10 years. People who get the vaccine are protected against 23 types of bacteria that cause pneumococcal pneumonia and other pneumococcal diseases. The shot is covered by Medicare. Some experts say it may be best to get the shot before age 65, anytime after age 50.

At Doylestown Hospital, every time a patient is admitted with any kind of respiratory distress, we deliver Evidenced Based Care Measures to care for and prevent pneumonia infection.

Evidenced Based Care Measures for Pneumonia:

As with many diseases, early detection and quality treatment are the cornerstones of successful treatment for pneumonia.

To maximize the likelihood of survival after the onset of pneumonia symptoms, patients at Doylestown hospital receive effective pneumonia treatment, which includes:

- Blood culture collection prior to antibiotic administration
- Antibiotics given within six hours of arrival
- Appropriate recommended antibiotic selection
- Influenza immunization screening, and given yearly for patients over 50, admitted during the flu season
- Pneumococcal immunization screening and given once after the age of 65 to prevent future pneumonia and its complications.
- Smoking cessation counseling for those patients who smoke or have smoked in the last year

Doylestown Results:

2006	2007	2008	Pennsylvania Rate*
Blood cultures collected			
96.5%	96.3%	95%	92.0%
Antibiotics given with in six hours			
94.6%	98.4%	98.7%	94.0%
Appropriate antibiotic selection			
89.5%	97.1%	90.6%	89.9%
Pneumococcal immunization screening/given			
95.2%	97.3%	94.7%	96.3%
Influenza immunization screening/given			
89%	94%	90.5%	82.7%
Smoking cessation counseling			
59.6%	98.2%	94.4%	

*Pennsylvania average rate; source: www.phcqa.org. Accessed 4/10/2009.