

# Pneumonia

## What is pneumonia?

Pneumonia is a chest infection in one or both of the lungs. It can be caused by a virus or bacteria. The infection causes the airways to become swollen and produce more mucus. This reduces the amount of oxygen getting into the body.

## Symptoms of pneumonia

Signs and symptoms differ depending on the cause of pneumonia:

- fast and/or difficult breathing
- high fever
- coughing
- decreased energy
- vomiting

## Treatment of pneumonia

The treatment process differs for each patient however, if your child difficulty breathing then they may need to be observed in hospital with additional oxygen, medications and hydration fluids.

Children admitted to hospital with viral pneumonia are not given antibiotics, as they are not effective on viral illnesses. However antibiotics will be administered if your child has bacterial pneumonia. Paracetamol and ibuprofen may be given to relieve any discomfort.

## If hospitalised

### Admission

The admission process is an opportunity to discuss your child's hospital stay and any special needs they may have while in hospital or for going home.

### Visiting hours

The Cabrini Paediatric Ward does not have set visiting hours.

### Discharge

Your child will be discharged when your doctor is happy with their progress and condition and you are confident with caring for them at home.

Please report to the reception desk in the foyer of the hospital before leaving to finalise any administrative paperwork.

## Care at home

- It is important for your child to rest at home after leaving hospital. Breathing is more difficult when your child is upset.
- Give your child smaller, yet more frequent, diet and fluids - this helps your child to not tire as easily with feeding and reduces the risk of dehydration.
- Ensure your child remains in a smoke-free environment to assist with their breathing and recovery
- Your child may find being propped upright on pillows while resting and sleeping more comfortable instead of lying completely flat
- If your child has been prescribed antibiotics, be sure to complete the entire course

## Follow-up

Please contact your doctor's rooms to organise a follow-up appointment.

## When to contact your doctor

- Any increased difficulty with breathing
- Reduced feeding and reduced wet nappies/toileting
- Persistent temperature of 38.5°C or higher

## Questions

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact the Ward using the phone number below.

Cabrini Malvern Paediatric Ward  
183 Wattletree Road, Malvern VIC 3144  
03 9508 1378

Cabrini Brighton Paediatric Ward  
243 New Street, Brighton VIC 3186  
03 9508 5690

