



Postoperative Pneumonia



Overview

Pneumonia is an infection in one or both lungs. When you get it after surgery, we call it "postoperative pneumonia." It can be especially hard to fight off pneumonia when your body is healing from surgery. It can make your hospital stay much longer than expected. For some patients, it can be deadly.

Causes

Pneumonia is caused by a viral, bacterial or fungal infection. These germs can enter your lungs through medical equipment. The types of germs found in hospitals can be resistant to drugs, and that makes them very dangerous. You can also be exposed to germs at home as you recover from your surgery.

Symptoms

The symptoms of pneumonia include fever, chills and a cough. You may have chest pain and shortness of breath. You may have nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. You may feel fatigued. These symptoms tend to last longer than those of a common cold or flu.

Treatment

Treatment depends on your needs. You may need to be hospitalized for several days. Antibiotics and other medications may help. Breathing assistance can, too. So if you see signs of pneumonia, tell a healthcare worker immediately. They can create a care plan that is right for you.