



## Collapsed Lung (Pneumothorax)



### Overview

This happens when a pocket of air builds up in the space between your chest wall and one of your lungs. The air pocket presses and forces air out of your lung. And when you try to breathe in, your lung has no room to hold the air. It has collapsed.

### Causes

There are several reasons why a lung collapses. It can happen in a person when weak air sacs in the lung burst, releasing air into the chest. It may be linked to lung disease, infection or some other lung condition. It can happen because of a puncture wound in your chest. A gunshot, knife wound or hard blow to the chest can cause it. It may be caused by a medical procedure. And, it may be linked to sudden changes in air pressure, which can happen during airplane flights or deep-sea diving.

### Symptoms

A collapsed lung usually causes a sudden, sharp pain in the chest. It's hard for you to breathe. You may take short, rapid breaths, and you may cough. Your heart may beat faster than normal. You may feel tired, and your skin may turn a bluish color.

### Treatment

Treatment depends on your needs. You may need supplemental oxygen. You may need to have the air in your chest taken out. You may need surgery to fix an injury so your lung can reinflate. Your doctor will create a care plan that's right for you.

