



# Pneumococcal infection

Your child may have been exposed to pneumococcal infection. Pneumococcus (*Streptococcus pneumoniae*) is bacteria that can cause a variety of different infections including ear and lung infections.

## If you think your child has a pneumococcal infection:

- Tell your childcare provider or call the school.
- Your child does not need to stay home from childcare or school if they are healthy enough for routine activities.
- For more information, call Hennepin County HSPHD-Epidemiology at 612-543-5230 or your local health department.

## Parent/Guardian information

### Symptoms

Your child may have fever, ear pain, or pull on their ear. Sometimes there is ear drainage and redness. Your child may have a change in behavior or eating habits.

If your child is infected, the time until they develop symptoms varies on location of infection but can be as short as 24 hours

### Spread

- By coughing or sneezing.
- By touching hands, objects, or surfaces contaminated with secretions from the nose or mouth.

### Contagious period

Unknown, but most likely while the bacteria is present in respiratory secretions.

### Call your health care provider

If your child has a high fever or ear pain that does not stop. Antibiotics may be prescribed.

### Prevention

- In Minnesota, all children 2 years of age or younger enrolled in childcare must be vaccinated with the pneumococcal vaccine or have a legal exemption. Vaccination includes a series of 4 doses total with one at 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, and 12-15 months.
- Cover nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing by using a tissue or your sleeve. Dispose of used tissues in the trash.

## Pneumococcal infection

- Wash hands after touching anything that could be contaminated with secretions from the nose or mouth. Your child may need help with handwashing.
- Clean and disinfect anything that comes in contact with secretions from the nose or mouth.
- Do not expose your child to second-hand tobacco smoke. Smoke increases the risk for serious respiratory infections and middle ear infections.

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