

Defend yourself against pneumonia

SOT

Dr. Fred Burke

OSF HealthCare emergency department physician

"The most common bacteria that causes it is strep pneumonia [in medical terms, streptococcus pneumoniae or pneumococcus]. The viruses that cause it are things like RSV [respiratory syncytial virus], flu [influenza] and COVID-19 [coronavirus]." (:08)

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"It can cause a consolidation in the lungs. That interferes with air movement. You can also get fluid buildup and scarring in the lungs." (:12)

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"If we find it's from a viral infection, people have to ride it out. There's no treatment for [the ailment itself]. But we can treat the symptoms. We can give Tylenol for fever or an inhaler for shortness of breath or wheezing. If it's from a bacterial infection, we give antibiotic medication." (:16)

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"One complication is sepsis, when the infection spreads to the blood. That can cause organ failure. Pneumonia can also cause respiratory failure [when the lungs aren't working properly]. Those people might require additional oxygen. Or if it serious enough, they might require intubation [a breathing tube down the throat] or be placed on life support." (:12)