

# Fight the chill!

BodyBASICS

*Extreme cold can trigger pneumonia, keep yourself warm!*

India accounts for the maximum number of pneumonia cases, especially among children. Though our lungs are designed to cough out the pockets of mucus before an infection sets in, pneumonia can occur during the course of any normal cough or cold. The mucus secreted in the lungs is a breeding ground for bacteria and viruses.

- Going blue around the lips and face
- Wheezing. Although wheezing is more often a sign of a viral chest cold, it sometimes can mean pneumonia.
- Loss of appetite

## TREATMENT

Call your doctor immediately if your child has a cough and fever accompanied with laboured or rapid breathing.

● Antibiotics are usually used to help fight the bacterial infection. However, in some cases, pneumonia is caused by a virus, in which case antibiotics are not helpful. Medication as per the diagno-



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## WHAT IS PNEUMONIA?

Pneumonia is an infection inside the lungs. It occurs when either bacteria or viruses get stuck in the lungs, causing the germs to multiply and increase infection.

## Major symptoms

- Moderate to severe cough.
- Sustained rapid or laboured breathing
- Medium to high fever, usually over 102 degrees, but not always.
- Chest pain, not just during coughing, but between coughing fits as well.
- Vomiting

sis is prescribed by the doctor.

- Nebulisations are usually used to symptomatically relieve respiratory distress.
- Intravenous fluids are required for rehydrating, if the patient is a child and not accepting feeds.

## PREVENTION

A preventive vaccine for pneumonia is available and should be administered as advised by your doctor.

(Inputs by Dr Rajiv Chhabra, consultant paediatric & neonatal intensivist, Artemis Health Institute, Gurgaon)