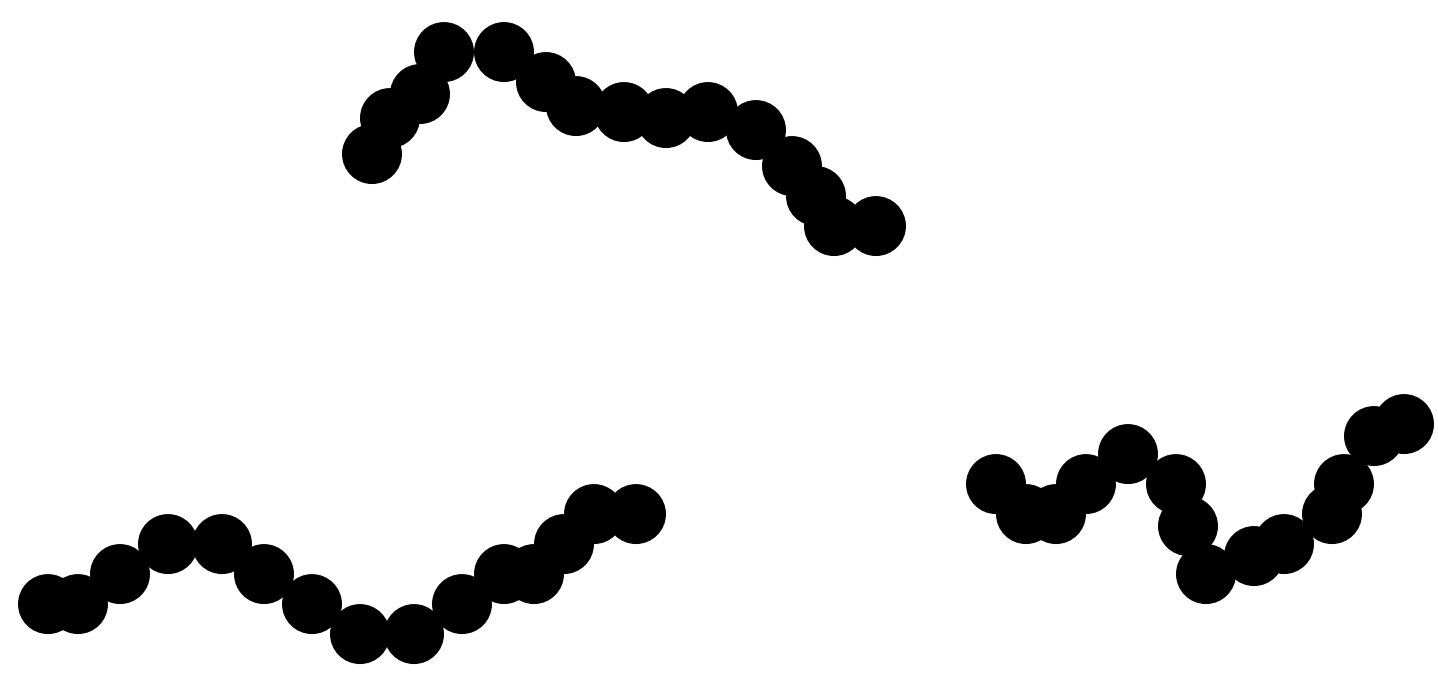# Pneumococcal Disease

Fact Sheet

Pneumococcal disease is caused by bacteria. The disease is most common in the winter and spring, but it may occur at any time of the year. Pneumococcal infections range from ear and sinus infections to pneumonia and bloodstream infections.

The disease spreads from person to person by coughing, sneezing, or contact with respiratory droplets. The bacteria that case the disease can live in the nose and throat of healthy children and adults without making them sick.

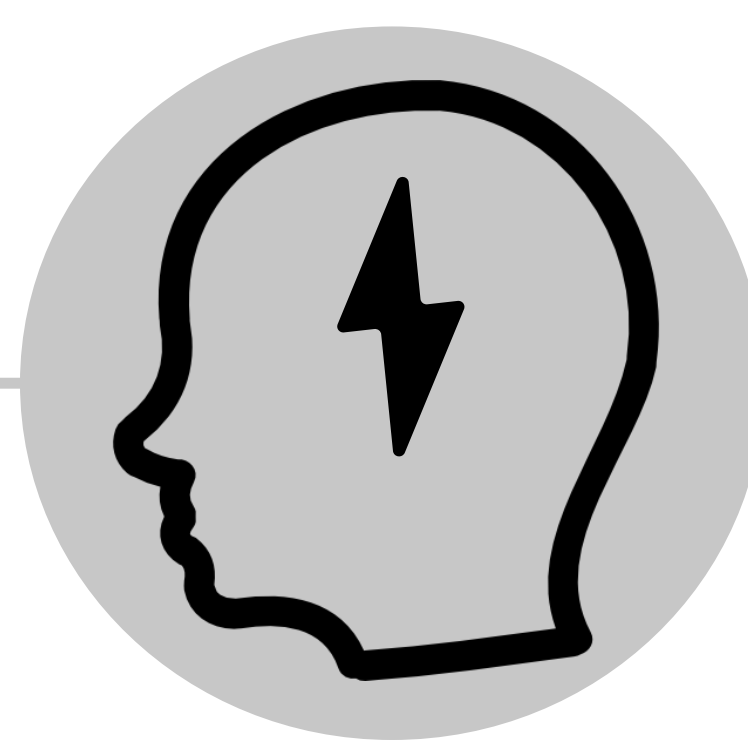# Signs and Symptoms

High Fever and Chills
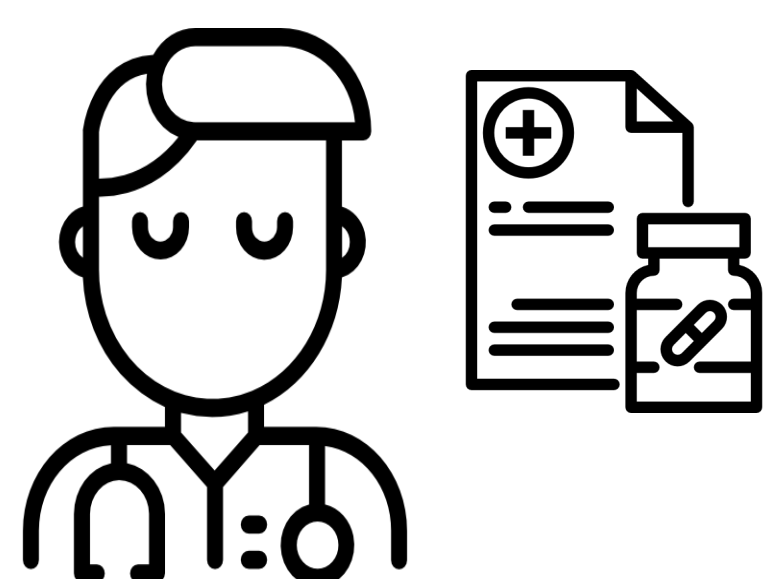
Cough

Earaches

Stiff Neck

Headache

Mental Confusion

Other symptoms include shortness of breath and feeling generally poor.

Talk to your healthcare provider if you think you or your family member has pneumococcal disease. This disease is treated with antibiotics. People with severe illness may need to be treated in the hospital.

Serious Illness

Pneumococcal disease can be very serious in young children and older adults. Brain and other learning problems, hearing loss, and even death can occur during or after infections.

Who Gets Pneumococcal Disease?

Anyone can get this disease. People at highest risk include:

- Children under 2 years and those in daycare
- People 65 years of age and older
- People with certain medical problems or weak immune systems

Prevention

The best way to prevent this disease is to get vaccinated. Two different vaccines are available to prevent this disease. Talk with your healthcare provider to make sure you are up-to-date on vaccine.

Washing your hands and covering your cough and sneezes with your sleeve can also help protect you and others.

For More Information, Visit:

1. www.maine.gov/dhhs/pneumococcal
2. www.cdc.gov/pneumococcal

You can also call Maine CDC at 1-800-821-5821.