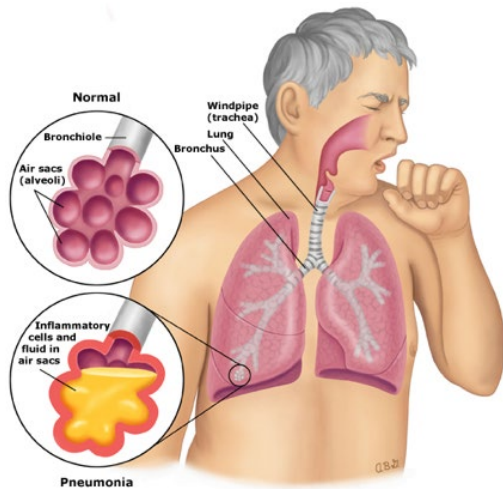


COVID-19 Educational Resource for Families and Caregivers

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 stands for coronavirus disease 2019. COVID-19 is a new respiratory disease caused by a novel (or new) coronavirus. It is caused by a virus called SARS-CoV-2 that first appeared in late 2019 and quickly spread around the world.

Symptoms associated with COVID-19 can include a fever, cough and trouble breathing. Problems with breathing occur when the infection affects the lungs and causes pneumonia (see below) and possibly acute respiratory distress syndrome.



What is pneumonia?

Pneumonia is an infection that inflames the air sacs in one or both lungs. The air sacs may fill with fluid or pus (purulent material), causing cough with phlegm or pus, fever, chills and difficulty breathing. A variety of organisms, including bacteria, viruses and fungi, can cause pneumonia. In patients impacted by COVID-19, pneumonia can worsen and turn into acute respiratory distress syndrome.

What is acute respiratory distress syndrome?

Acute respiratory distress syndrome, or ARDS, is a serious lung condition. It is caused by a buildup of fluid in the lungs. A buildup of fluid in the lungs can keep oxygen from getting into the blood, which then prohibits the organs in the body from getting the oxygen needed.

Common symptoms of ARDS include:

- Trouble breathing
- Breathing much faster than usual
- Fingertips and lips looking slightly blue

How is ARDS treated?

ARDS is treated in the hospital, usually in the intensive care unit (ICU).

People who have trouble breathing might be treated with high amounts of oxygen. But people who are having a very hard time breathing usually need a breathing tube. A breathing tube is a tube that goes down the throat and into the lungs. The other end is attached to a machine that helps with breathing (sometimes called a ventilator or life support machine).

When the tube is in place, people are not able to eat or talk. Additionally, they are usually sedated. That means the doctor has given them medicines to make them very sleepy. This helps them not feel pain or anxiety. As people can breathe on their own again, the doctor can remove the tube.

The stress of this illness is hard on the body. Over time, people can become sicker, needing more life support measures, like high doses of medication for blood pressure support and dialysis. Sadly, there is also a serious risk of death from this infection.



Care for patients diagnosed with COVID-19

Your loved one has been admitted to the hospital for monitoring of lab values, imaging and treating symptoms that may include high fever, low oxygen level or infection. Treatment may include, but not be limited to, antibiotics, oxygen, medications and treatments to support body system organs, such as to control blood pressure for the heart and circulatory system and support kidney function through dialysis. It is important to understand the possible outcomes of this virus as a patient's condition can change quickly.

BEST CASE SCENARIO:

Resolution of the infection through medical support, such as IV fluids and antibiotics. Short stay in COVID unit, then discharged to home for recovery.

CONCERNING CASE SCENARIO:

Fever uncontrolled; additional oxygen does not resolve breathing issues; medications do not support critical body systems such as, blood pressure.

Longer stay in COVID unit with concern about patient's long-term outcome.

WORST CASE SCENARIO:

Breathing tube and breathing machine (ventilator or life support) required because the patient can no longer support own breathing; lab values indicate that infection is getting worse; vital body organ systems failing (kidneys not working; heart cannot maintain blood pressures).

Long stay in COVID unit with concern patient will not survive.

Providing the best medical care for your loved one is our greatest priority. Please know, every patient and situation is different, but we are committed to keeping you informed.

