

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Schools are seeing a rise in cases of pneumonia. Pneumonia is a serious lung infection that can cause symptoms like fever, cough, chest pain, and difficulty breathing. It spreads through close contact and often shares symptoms with other respiratory illnesses.

Suspect pneumonia rather than a typical cold or cough if your child shows certain signs that suggest a more serious illness. Things to look for include:

1. **High Fever:** While colds may cause mild fevers, pneumonia often brings a high fever (sometimes above 102°F / 38.9°C) that persists.
2. **Persistent or Worsening Cough:** If a cough is especially deep, painful, or productive (bringing up greenish or yellow mucus), this could indicate pneumonia.
3. **Difficulty Breathing:** Watch for fast, shallow breathing or visible effort to breathe, like nostril flaring or chest retractions (where the skin pulls in between the ribs). These are signs the lungs are working harder.
4. **Chest Pain:** Complaints of chest pain, especially sharp pain when breathing or coughing, may signal pneumonia.
5. **Fatigue and Weakness:** Children with pneumonia often seem unusually tired, weak, or lethargic, even if they're resting.

If these symptoms appear, especially together, it's a good idea to consult a doctor promptly. Early intervention can help treat pneumonia effectively and reduce complications.

To help keep our students healthy, please encourage frequent hand-washing, covering coughs and sneezes, and keeping children home if they're feeling sick. Staying up-to-date on vaccinations, including the flu shot, is also highly recommended, as some viral infections can lead to complications like pneumonia.

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