Aspiration and Pneumonia

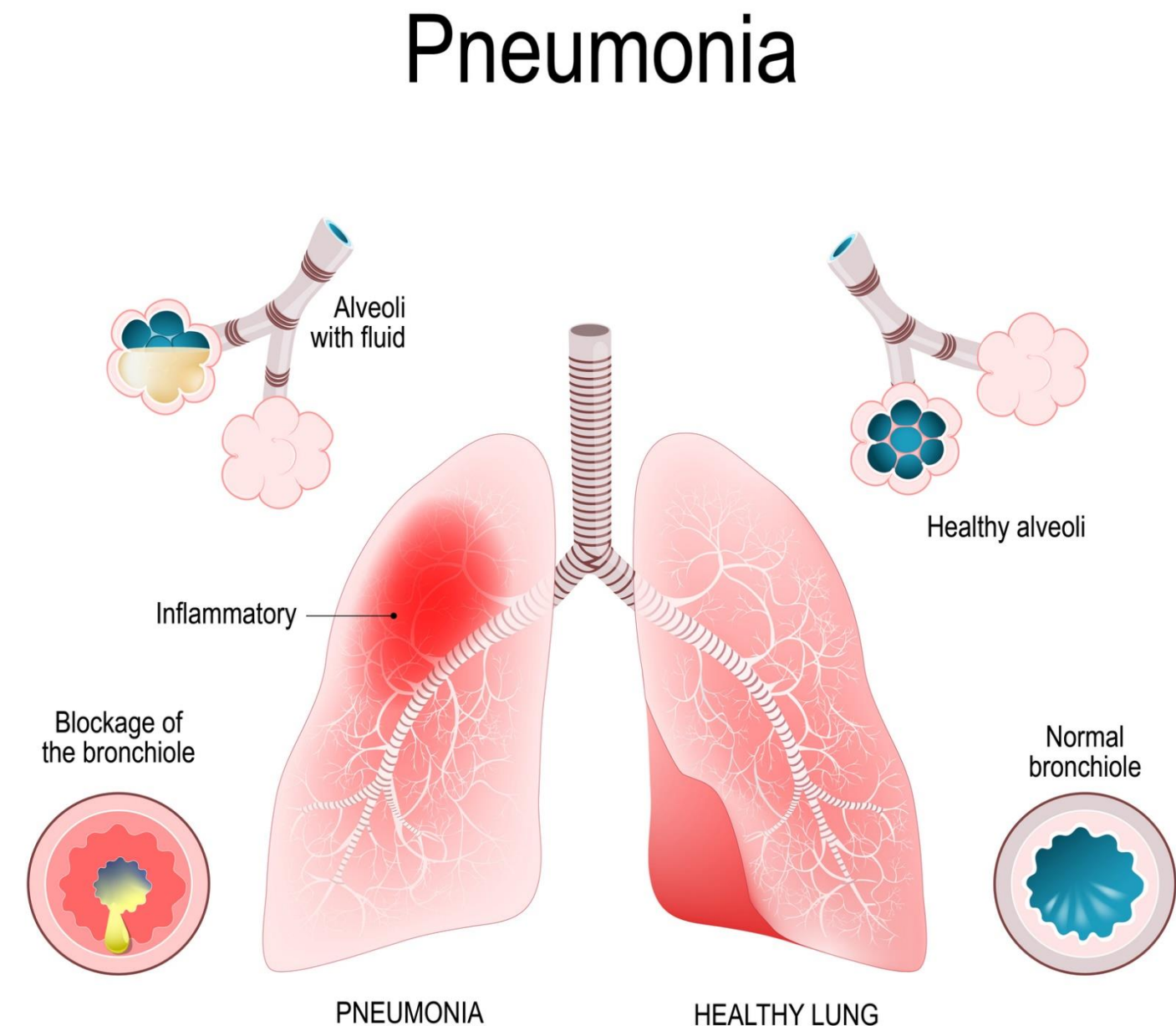## for CNAs

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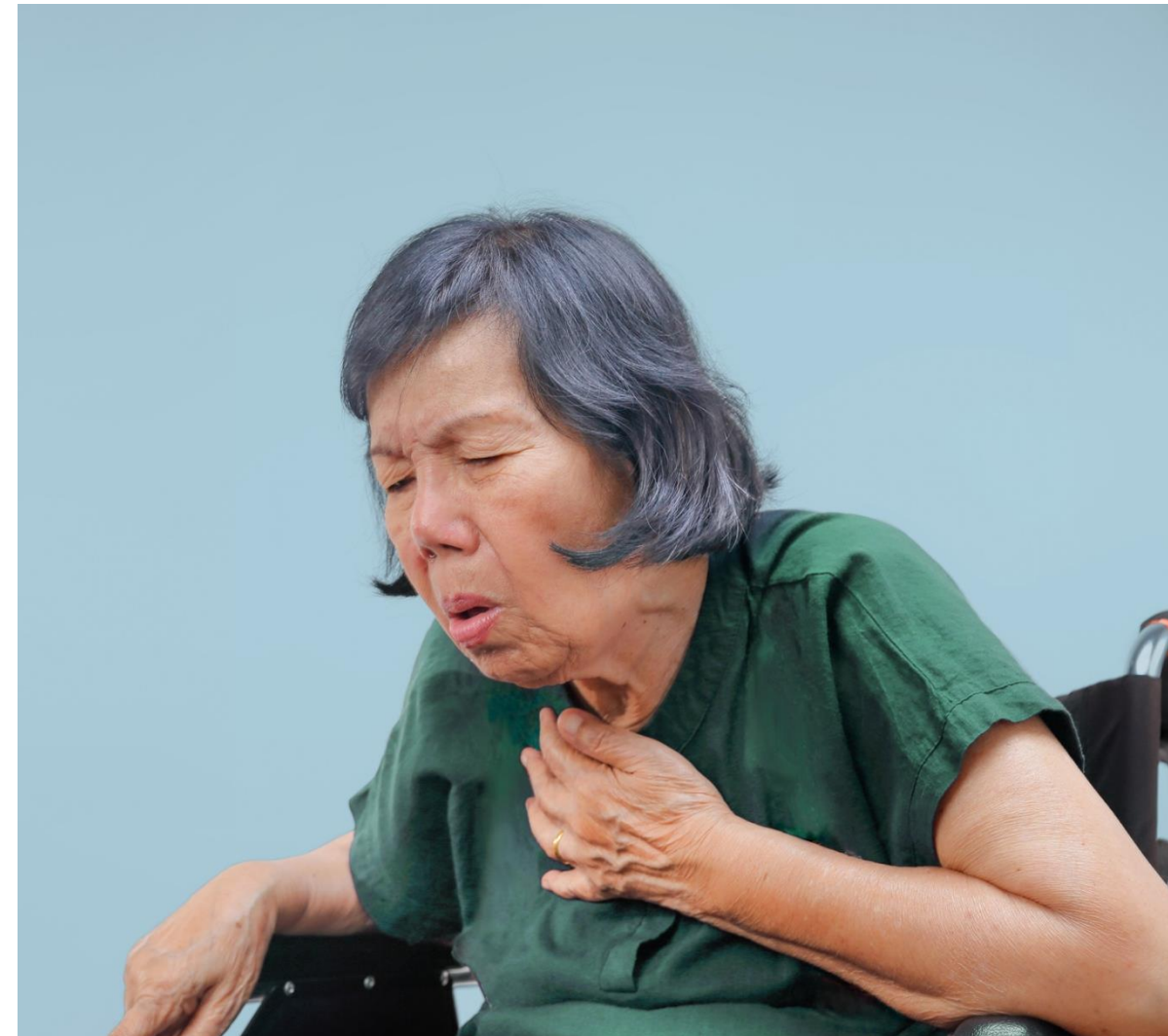Atlantic Health System

What is Pneumonia?

- Pneumonia is an infection of the lungs caused by a virus or bacteria.

- It causes the air sacs in the lungs to become swollen and unable to do their job of getting oxygen into the blood so that oxygen can be delivered to every cell.

- The symptoms include shortness of breath, cough, high fever, and chills.

- Pneumonia can be caused by inhaling bacteria or viruses.

Pneumonia

Alveoli with fluid

Healthy alveoli

Inflammatory

Blockage of the bronchiole

Normal bronchiole

PNEUMONIA

HEALTHY LUNG

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Pneumonia – Signs and Symptoms

The signs and symptoms of pneumonia include:

1. Fever, chills, loss of appetite
2. Fast or shallow breathing
3. Coughing with mucous production
4. Sharp pain in chest
5. Wheezing

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How Do I Prevent my Resident from Getting Pneumonia?

People with breathing diseases such as COPD are more likely to get pneumonia. These residents should not be exposed to other residents or staff that have colds or cold like symptoms.

Residents with breathing diseases like COPD should:

1. Get out of bed every day.
2. Take good deep breaths.
3. Drink plenty of fluids.
4. Use an incentive spirometer.
5. Be encouraged to get the pneumonia vaccine.

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Incentive Spirometer

Goal marker

Piston
(rises with each
deep breath)

Mouth piece

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What is Aspiration Pneumonia?

- Aspiration is a type of pneumonia caused by inhaling food, fluid, or stomach contents into the lungs.

- Residents with difficulty swallowing, Parkinson's Disease, Stroke, or dementia are more likely to have aspiration.

- In addition to the air sacs being swollen, there can be substances stuck in the lungs, making it even more difficult to breathe.

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Aspiration Pneumonia - Signs and Symptoms

People with aspiration pneumonia may show the following signs or symptoms:

1. Wet cough after a meal
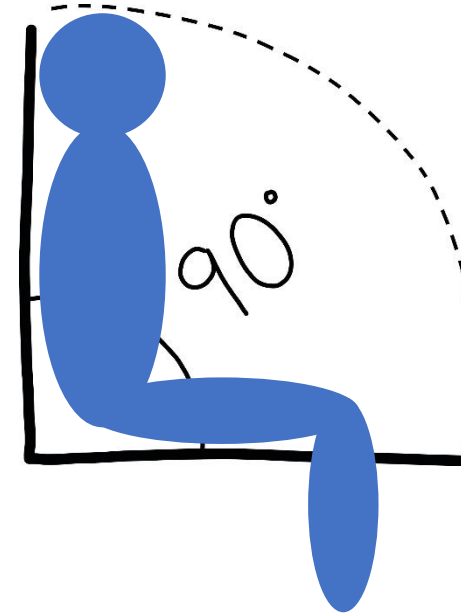2. Difficulty swallowing
3. Clearing of throat after eating
4. Fatigue
5. Poor oral hygiene

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How Do I Prevent my Resident from Getting Aspiration Pneumonia?

Have your resident:
1. Sit upright at 90 degrees when they eat.
2. Take small bites of food and small sips of liquid.
3. Cut food into smaller pieces.
4. Choose food types that are easier to chew and swallow.
5. Not talk when eating/drinking.
6. Limit distractions during mealtime.
7. Remain upright for 20-30 minutes after eating.

After eating, provide good oral care by brushing teeth. This removes food residue that can be aspirated.

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Looking for Pneumonia or Aspiration

Early recognition can help your resident get early treatment.

What you should do:

1. Be aware of the signs and symptoms of pneumonia and aspiration.

2. Report any unusual cough after eating.

3. Report elevated temperature.

4. Report any complaints of shortness of breath.

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Aspiration and Pneumonia - Quiz

1. The sign and symptoms of pneumonia are shortness of breath, cough, high fever, and chills
    A. True   B. False

2. A resident with Parkinson's Disease is a resident that I should be watching for possible aspiration.
    A. True   B. False

3. Using an incentive spirometer helps my resident expand their lungs.
    A. True   B. False

4. Good oral care after eating is not necessary to prevent aspiration pneumonia.
    A. True   B. False

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Aspiration and Pneumonia - Quiz, Part 2

5. Early recognition of the signs and symptoms of pneumonia will not help my resident.

    A. True   B. False

6. After eating it is not important for my resident to remain upright.

    A. True   B. False

7. People with breathing problem diseases like COPD are not prone to pneumonia.

    A. True   B. False

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Answers

1. **True** - These are the signs and symptoms of pneumonia.

2. **True** - Residents with Parkinson's Disease are a greater risk for aspiration.

3. **True** – Incentive spirometers help to expand the lungs.

4. **False** – Good oral care is important to prevent aspiration pneumonia.

5. **False** – Recognizing and reporting the signs of pneumonia early can help your resident.

6. **False** – Residents should remain upright after eating for 20 to 30 minutes.

7. **False** – People with breathing problems are at increased risk for developing pneumonia.

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Certificate of Completion

TO

_____

FOR COMPETENCY IN **ASPIRATION AND PNEUMONIA**

_____   _____
SIGNED BY   DATE