

Common Causes of Pneumonia: Neonates (< 4 Weeks Old)

Pneumonia is an acute or chronic lung condition defined as inflammation of the alveoli or filling of the alveoli with fluid. It is usually caused by bacteria, fungi, viruses and sometimes by physical and chemical irritants. It typically presents with fever, chest congestion, difficulty breathing, cough and sputum. In neonates, common causes of pneumonia include Group B Streptococci and E. coli.



PLAY PICMONIC

Group B Streptococci

(B) Bee Stripper

Streptococcus agalactiae, also commonly called Group B streptococci (GBS), is a gram positive, bacitracin resistant, beta-hemolytic cocci that normally colonizes the vagina. It can therefore be inhaled during vaginal delivery, posing a risk for infection, particularly meningitis, sepsis and pneumonia in neonates. Pregnant women are routinely screened for the presence of *S. agalactiae* in the vagina at 35-37 weeks gestation. Women with positive cultures can receive intrapartum prophylactic treatment with IV penicillin during delivery.

E. coli

E. Coal-eye

This gram negative, lactose fermenting bacilli can be passed to a neonate during birth. Its polysaccharide capsule, K antigen, surround some pathogenic strains of E. coli. These pathogenic strains of K antigen can cause neonatal meningitis and pneumonia.