

# *Tequesta Family Practice*

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## **Bronchitis & Pneumonia**

### **Complementary/Alternative Medicine**

Usually preceded by upper respiratory tract infection  
Sudden onset of shaking, chills, fever, and chest pain  
Pneumonia shows classic signs of lung involvement (shallow breathing, cough, abnormal breath sounds, etc.)

In pneumonia, an X ray shows infiltration of fluid and lymph into the lungs

#### QUICK REVIEW

- Most cases of bronchitis and/or pneumonia do not require antibiotics.
- The natural approach to bronchitis and pneumonia involves two primary goals:
  1. stimulation of normal processes that promote the expectoration (removal) of mucus and
  2. enhancement of immune function.
- Vitamin C supplementation is warranted in all elderly patients with acute respiratory infection, especially those who are severely ill.
- The application of local heat followed by postural draining can help get rid of excessive mucus.
- Bromelain (the protein-digesting enzyme complex from pineapple) has shown good results in the treatment of upper respiratory tract infections.
- Botanical expectorants act to increase the quantity, decrease the viscosity, and promote the expulsion of the secretions of the respiratory tract.

The general approach to all infectious bronchial conditions and pneumonias includes stimulation of the immune system and support of respiratory tract drainage (for a full discussion of immune system stimulation see IMMUNE SUPPORT). Drainage is encouraged by the use of postural drainage, local heat, bromelain, and herbal expectorants. Persistent cough may indicate a serious condition. Consult your physician if your cough persists for more than one week, if it recurs, or if it is accompanied by high fever, rash, or persistent headache.

#### General Measures

- Rest (bed rest is preferred)
- Drink large amount of fluids (preferably diluted vegetable juices, soups, and herb teas)
- Limit simple sugar consumption (including fruit sugars) to less than 50 grams per day

#### Nutritional Supplements

In general, those supplements see recommendations in IMMUNE SUPPORT. Especially important are

- Vitamin C: 500 mg every two hours
- Bioflavonoids: 1,000 mg per day
- Vitamin A: 25,000 IU per day
- Beta-carotene: 200,000 IU per day
- Zinc lozenges: One lozenge containing 23 mg elemental zinc every two waking hours for one week

NOTE: Prolonged supplementation at this dose is not recommended, as it may suppress immune function.

#### Herbal Expectorants

Herbal expectorants are available over the counter, or you can make your own. Follow the dosage on the product label. For glycerol guaiacolate, the dosage is 200 to 400 mg three times per day for adults and 200 mg three times per day for children age's six to twelve.

Here is an expectorant mixture you can make yourself.

2 oz licorice root

1 oz wild cherry bark 1 oz coltsfoot

1 oz lobelia.

1 oz horehound

Mix the ingredients together. Boil the mixture slowly in 4 cups of water for 2 minutes; let it steep for 10 minutes more. Strain the mixture, and take 1 cup every 2 hours if an adult ( $\frac{1}{2}$  cup for children). Sweeten with honey if necessary.