

Health Newsletter

-Generali China Life

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Historical Newsletters

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Updated Therapeutics

Guidelines for



With winter approached, COVID-19 has come again, the WHO has updated its guidelines for COVID-19 therapeutics, with revised recommendations for patients with non-severe COVID-19. This is the 13th update to these guidelines.

WHO continues to strongly recommend nirmatrelvir-ritonavir (also known by its brand name ‘Paxlovid’) for people at high-risk and moderate risk of hospitalization. The recommendations state that nirmatrelvir-ritonavir is considered the best choice for most eligible patients, given its therapeutic benefits, ease of administration and fewer concerns about potential harms. Nirmatrelvir-ritonavir was first recommended by WHO in April 2022. If nirmatrelvir-ritonavir is not available to patients at high-risk of hospitalization, WHO suggests the

use of molnupiravir or remdesivir instead.

WHO suggests against the use of molnupiravir and remdesivir for patients at moderate risk, judging the potential harms to outweigh the limited benefits in patients at moderate risk of hospital admission.

For people at low risk of hospitalization, WHO does not recommend any antiviral therapy. Symptoms like fever and pain can continue to be managed with analgesics like paracetamol.

WHO also recommends against use of a new antiviral (VV116) for patients, except in clinical trials.

The update also includes a strong recommendation against the use of ivermectin for patients with non-severe COVID-19. WHO continues to advise that in patients with severe or critical COVID-19, ivermectin should only be used in clinical trials.

Information source: WHO Website

How to Protect Yourself From Contagious Types of Pneumonia

Pneumonia is a lung infection that involves inflammation, fluid, or pus collecting in the lungs. There are many different types of pneumonia, and the specific type can determine the risk of severity, symptoms, and even treatment options.

Another thing that the specific type of pneumonia can shed light on is whether or not it's contagious. Yes, you heard that right: some forms of pneumonia can be passed between people. To get more information on those types—and what you need to know about how they present and how to avoid them—we tapped some infectious disease experts. Here's what you need to know about the contagious forms of pneumonia.



Defining Pneumonia

Pneumonia is an infection that affects one or both lungs, according to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI). Pneumonia causes the air sacs—called alveoli—of the lungs to fill up with fluid or pus. That can lead to uncomfortable symptoms like a cough with or without mucus, fever, chills, and trouble breathing.

Pneumonia can be severe and sometimes even fatal. Pneumonia can kill you, It's only since the development of antibiotics that treat pneumonia and vaccines that prevent pneumonia that it's no longer the case.

Risk Factors For Catching Pneumonia

When pneumonia is caused by either bacteria or viruses, it can spread between people in a variety of ways:

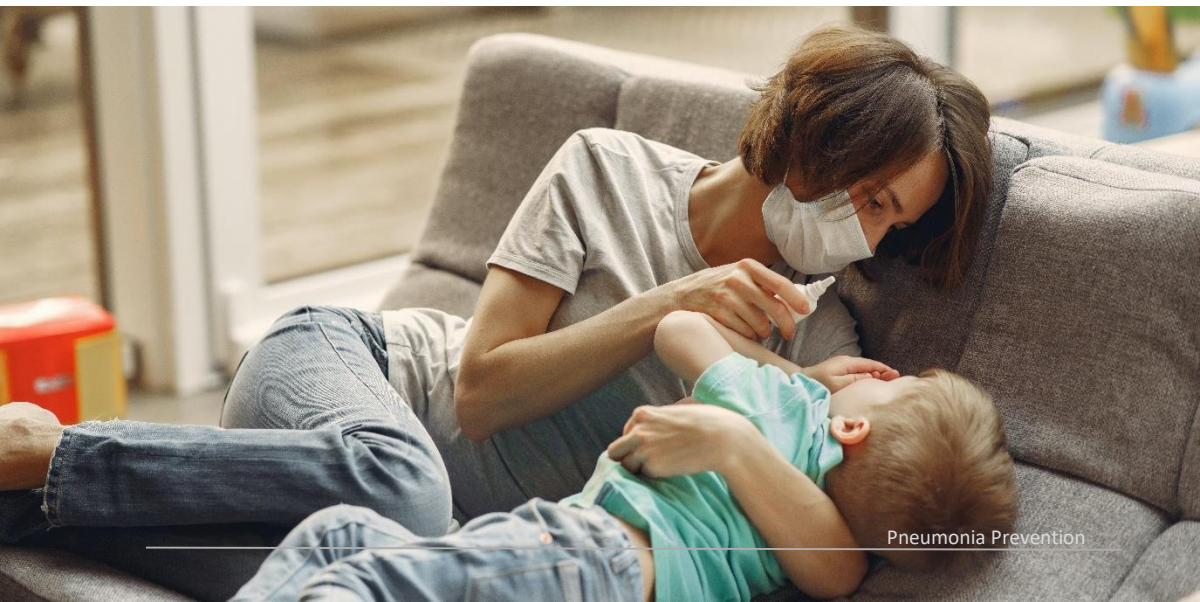
- Being exposed to viral particles through uncovered coughs or sneezes
- Sharing drinks or utensils with an infected person
- Touching a tissue from an infected person
- Taking care of a person with pneumonia

It's important to note that these are mainly examples of community-acquired pneumonia, which occurs when someone develops pneumonia in the general community, per the CDC.

Anyone can get pneumonia, according to the ALA, but some people are at a greater risk of having severe pneumonia than others.

Those include:

- People age 65 and over.
- Children under two years old.
- People with chronic lung diseases like COPD or cystic fibrosis.
- People with serious chronic illnesses, like heart disease, diabetes, and sickle cell disease.
- People with a weakened immune system due to HIV/AIDs, an organ transplant, chemotherapy, or long-term steroid use.
- People with difficulty swallowing.
- Those who had a recent respiratory infection, like a cold, laryngitis, or the flu.
- People who have been recently hospitalized.
- Smokers.
- People who abuse drugs and alcohol.
- Exposure to certain chemicals, pollutants, or toxic fumes, including secondhand smoke.



Prevention

Here's where some vaccines come into play—there are actually a few different ones that can significantly lower your risk, as long as your doctor gives you the all-clear.

The flu vaccine: "The flu vaccine is actually very effective at preventing bacterial pneumonia, since influenza predisposes you to bacterial pneumonia as a secondary infection. This vaccine can also help prevent viral pneumonia from the influenza virus.

Pneumococcal vaccines: There are two vaccines available to prevent infections from the pneumococcus bacteria, the most common type of bacteria that causes pneumonia pneumococcal

conjugate vaccine (PCV13) and the pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine (PPSV23).

These are usually recommended for adults over the age of 65 or older, people with chronic diseases, and people who smoke. "The current vaccines are very effective.

The Hib vaccine: Hib stands for *Hemophilic influenza* type b, which is a type of bacteria that can cause pneumonia and meningitis. It's recommended for all children under the age of five in the U.S., and is given to babies as young as two months old.

The COVID-19 vaccine: While the vaccines are new, they have been proven to lower your risk of contracting a severe form of the virus, which can include serious complications like pneumonia.

Aside from getting vaccinated, the CDC emphasizes the importance of careful hand hygiene and doing your best to avoid people who are sick to lower your risk of pneumonia.

If you do happen to develop symptoms of pneumonia, your best bet is to call a healthcare provider and schedule an appointment—they can give you a once-over and determine exactly what you're dealing with (and, if it is pneumonia, possibly which type) so you can receive the correct treatment.



Understanding Diabetes

As a common disease in our life, diabetes has been well known to the public. Despite our material living conditions are improved, the occurrence of diabetes around us are becoming higher. November 14th is the World Diabetes Day and let us talk about diabetes here. According to the World Health Organization, the number of patients with diabetes worldwide has increased from 108 million in 1980 to 422 million in 2014. According to the "Guidelines for the Prevention and Treatment of Type 2 Diabetes in China (2020)", the incidence of diabetes in China continues to increase and it is about 11.2% now. The number of diabetes patients over 65 years old in China is about 35.5 million which is the top one in the world.



What is diabetes?

Diabetes is an endocrine disease when the pancreas does not produce enough insulin, or the human body does not respond properly to insulin and the blood sugar continually to rise in in the body. Most cases of diabetes are chronic or lifelong, and diabetes can also lead to a series of health problems, such as cardiovascular disease, neurological disorder, and eye problem etc. However, diabetes can be controlled by medication treatment and healthy lifestyle.

What are the types of diabetes?

Type 2 diabetes: The body does not produce enough insulin and/or the body does not respond properly to insulin (also known as insulin resistance). It is the most common type of diabetes and mainly occurs in adults.

Type 1 diabetes: It's the autoimmune disease which the immune system attacks pancreatic cells and leads to diabetes. Around 10% cases of diabetes have type 1 diabetes which usually develops during adolescence.

Gestational diabetes: The high blood sugar condition that occurs during pregnancy when blood sugar level is higher than normal but lower than the level of diagnosed diabetes. Cases of gestational diabetes usually recover after the delivery while it increases the risk of pregnant woman to developing type 2 diabetes in the future.

Pre-diabetes: Blood sugar level is higher than normal and does not reach the level of diagnosed diabetes.

What are the common symptoms of diabetes?

- Thirsty or dry mouth
- Frequent urination
- Fatigue
- Blurred vision
- Weight loss
- Numbness and tingling in the hands or feet
- Skin sores or wounds are difficult to heal
- Recurrent skin and/or vaginal fungal infections.

What causes diabetes?


•Insulin resistance: Type 2 diabetes is mainly caused by insulin resistance. Insulin resistance occurs when cells in the muscles, fat and liver do not respond to insulin. Causes of insulin resistance include obesity, lack of physical activity, unhealthy diet, genetics and medication.

•Autoimmune diseases: Type 1 diabetes occurs when the self-immune system attacks insulin-producing cells in the pancreas.

•Endocrine disorders: The placenta releases insulin-resistant hormones and gestational diabetes may occur during the pregnancy. Other conditions, such as acromegaly and Cushing's syndrome, can also lead to type 2 diabetes.

•Pancreatic damage: Physical damage to the pancreas (such as pancreatic disease, surgery, or injury) can affect the pancreas's ability to make insulin and lead to diabetes.





diabetes

•**Genetic mutation:** may lead to neonatal diabetes.

•**Long-term utilization of some medications:** can lead to type 2 diabetes, including HIV/AIDS medications and corticosteroids.

What are the complications of diabetes?

Cardiovascular disease is the most common long-term complication of diabetes and includes:

- Coronary artery disease.
- Heart attack.
- Stroke.
- Atherosclerosis.

Other complications include:

- Nerve damage (neuropathy) that can cause numbness, tingling, and/or pain
- Kidney disease or kidney failure
- Retinopathy, which can lead to blindness
- Diabetes-related foot disease
- Skin infection
- Amputation
- Sexual dysfunction, such as erectile dysfunction or vaginal dryness.

How to diagnose diabetes?

The following test results typically indicate if you don't have diabetes, have prediabetes or have diabetes. These values may vary slightly. In addition, healthcare providers rely on more than one test to diagnose diabetes.

How to manage Diabetes effectively?

Blood glucose monitoring: Blood glucose monitoring is the key to ensuring the effectiveness of treatment.

Oral medications: Oral medications help control blood sugar level for the cases of type 2 diabetes and prediabetes, including metformin, GLP-1 receptor agonists, and SGLT-2 inhibitors.

Insulin: Patients with type 1 diabetes need insulin injections to treat the diabetes, and some patients with type 2 diabetes also need insulin treatment.

Healthy eating: Healthy and balance diet is the key to manage diabetes. If you are taking insulin, you need to calculate your daily carbohydrate intake, and it can also help you control your body weight and reduce the risk of heart disease.

Exercise: Exercise can increase the insulin sensitivity and help reduce insulin resistance.

How to prevent diabetes?

Although diabetes associated with autoimmune disease and family history can't be prevented, you can take some actions to reduce the risks of developing pre-diabetes, type 2 diabetes, and gestational diabetes:

•**Maintain a healthy weight:** For overweight patients with prediabetes or type 2 diabetes, only losing about 7% of their body weight will have very positive effect on their blood sugar level.

•**Aerobic exercise:** Regular aerobic exercise can prevent prediabetes and type 2 diabetes effectively and can also help patients control their blood sugar properly. It is recommended to conduct at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise

per day.

•**Healthy diet:** Eat more fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, whole grains and legumes while avoid excessive sugar or saturated fat intake.

•**Quit smoking:** Smoking increases the risks of diabetes and cardiovascular disease, please quit smoking as soon as possible.

•**Control risk factors of heart disease,** such as high blood pressure, high blood lipids, etc.

•**Stress management:** Hormones produced under the stress condition may inhibit the efficacy of insulin in body and raise the body's blood sugar. Try to manage your stress and get enough sleep.

Type of test	In-range (mg/dL)	Prediabetes (mg/dL)	Diabetes (mg/L)
Fasting blood glucose test	Less than 100.	100 to 125.	126 or higher.
Random blood glucose test	N/A.	N/A.	200 or higher (with classic symptoms of hyperglycemia or hyperglycemic crisis).
HbA1c	Less than 5.7%.	5.7% to 6.4%.	6.5% or higher.



Animal Bites

Recently, there have been many reports of dog bites in China, and animal bites have once again attracted people's attention. In fact, animal bites are not uncommon. This time we will introduce some basic knowledge about animal bites.



Definition:

Animal bites we often refer to include not only bites by the teeth of animals, but also damage to the skin or tissue caused by the claws or other parts of the animal.

Animal bites may cause bleeding, infection, pain, scarring and other consequences, and in severe cases may even be life-threatening.

Incidence:

It is estimated that in Europe and the United States, 175-740 persons per 100,000 people are bitten by dogs each year. In China, about 40 million people are bitten by cats and dogs every year. This data may be biased because some patients bitten by animals may not seek medical treatment or report them in time. In addition, the incidence of animal bites is also affected by factors such as region, season, occupation, age, gender, etc., and there may be differences between different groups of people.

How to avoid being bitten by animals?

- **Keep babies or young children away from animals**, especially dogs, cats or other animals with teeth.
- **Do not disturb animals while they are eating or resting** as they may feel threatened and upset.
- **Do not approach unfamiliar animals without the owner's permission**, especially those that appear nervous or scared.
- **Do not reach out and touch unfamiliar animals** as they may mistake you for attacking them.
- **Do not run past an animal** as they may instinctively chase you.
- **Do not try to separate fighting animals** as they may turn on you.
- **If an animal approaches you, remain calm and stand still or back away slowly**, avoid eye contact, and do not shout or make threatening gestures.



What are the possible signs before an animal attacks a person?

Before animals attack people, they usually show some warning signs, such as making threatening sounds, enlarging their body size, showing teeth or claws, etc. These are behaviors animals perform to intimidate each other, or to protect their territory and resources. If we encounter such a situation, the best way is to stay calm and not make provocation or escape movements. Instead, slowly back away and try to avoid eye contact to let the animal feel that we are not a threat.

However, there are also many animals that attack without any warning. Some animals even attack people suddenly in a friendly state.

If you are bitten by an animal, you should take the following steps:

Immediately flush the wound with clean water to remove as much dirt or foreign matter as possible. If possible, clean the wound with soap or disinfectant.

Apply pressure to the wound with clean gauze or a bandage to stop bleeding. If the wound is bleeding a lot, you can apply pressure directly over the wound to slow the blood flow. Elevate the wound to reduce swelling and pain.

If the wound is shallow, you can apply iodine tincture or other antibacterial ointment to the wound and then cover the wound with a dressing. You should change the dressing every day until the wound heals. Note that even small wounds require prompt medical attention.

Vaccine precautions:

Vaccination is an important step in dealing with animal bites. See a doctor promptly, complete vaccinations as directed by the doctor, and pay attention to the following matters:

Clean the wound promptly and disinfect it with soapy water or iodine or alcohol.

Complete the full course of vaccination on time without interruption or delay.

Pay attention to your own body reactions. If you experience adverse reactions such as fever, headache, nausea, etc., seek medical treatment in time.

If the bite is on the head, or the wound is deep, or the patient is immunocompromised, the patient should also be vaccinated with anti-rabies serum or immune globulin.



Autumn and Winter Health Nutrition Advice

The principle of health and nutrition in autumn and winter

2023 has entered the alternating season of autumn and winter, and according to traditional Chinese medicine, this time belongs to the "golden" season which corresponds to the lungs. In this time, a "flat supplement diet" is more suitable. It is suggested to avoid eating too much cold food, such as marine fish, shrimp, cold drinks, etc., so as not to hurt the lungs or cause diseases. Many people will experience the phenomenon of "autumn dryness" according to traditional Chinese medicine during this season, which is manifested as dry mouth, dry lips, dry nose, dry throat, dry stool, dry skin, etc. Based on the "Dietary Guidelines for Chinese Residents (2022)", **adult men are recommended to drink 1700ml of water per day, and adult women are recommended to drink 1500ml of water per day.** You are suggested to appropriately increase your water intake to alleviate "autumn dryness", but you should avoid the intake of sugary drinks.

Dietary suggestions for autumn and winter

The alternation of autumn and winter will put the lungs in a vigorous state, and if it is too much, it may hurt the liver. To solve this, sour taste is suggested because it is beneficial to the liver. **Increasing the sour taste can protect the lung from being too vigorous while also has a certain effect of nourishing the liver.** If you eat too much spicy food in autumn and winter, you are prone to symptoms of dryness such as increasing fire, dryness, and constipation. Therefore, in the seasons of autumn and winter, **you are advised to choose some sour and moist food, including fresh fruits, ginkgo seeds, hawthorn, mustard greens, etc.** They are rich in both water and different vitamins. In addition, **root foods such as sweet potatoes, potatoes, taro, yams, lotus roots, etc** could also do good to you since they will supplement rich dietary fiber to help you with better digestion.



3. Autumn and winter recipe recommendations

Sour jujube kernel porridge

Ingredients: 10g of sour jujube kernels, 10g of cooked ground, 100g of japonica rice.

Method: Fry the sour jujube kernels until they are in yellow and bulging, then fry them with the cooked ground, filter the juice and set aside; Cook the japonica rice until becoming thick, mix with the filtered juice and cook for another 3-5 minutes.

Efficacy: It is suitable for people with insomnia, dreaming and staying up late. It will help to improve sleep quality and improve the overall condition of the body.

Yam pork rib soup:

Ingredients: 400 grams of small pork ribs, 150 grams of yam, 10 grams of Chinese wolfberry, 30 grams of carrots, 3 slices of ginger, 1 piece of pork bone broth in thick soup, 3 bowls of water (about 750 ml)

Method: Blanch the small pork ribs to remove the blood foam and boil them with ginger slices, carrots, yams, and wolfberries. Then continue to cook for 15-20 minutes after the water boils.

Efficacy: It has the effect of strengthening the spleen, stomach and kidney. This dish is not hot or dry, replenishing but not greasy. It also has a regulating effect on kidney deficiency and low back pain as well as loss of appetite.

Steamed pears:

Ingredients: about 350g of a snowflake pear, 5g of lily, 5g of rock sugar and some Chinese wolfberry
Method: Peel the pears and dig the core, cut them into pieces, add lilies, rock sugar and Chinese wolfberry, and steam them in a pot.

Efficacy: The pear taste is sweet and slightly sour. It is cool in nature but rich in nutrients. It could play a role in moistening the lungs, relieving cough and nourishing the body.

Stir-fried scallops with broccoli

Ingredients: 50 grams of fresh scallops, 100 grams of broccoli, slight amount of salt, cooking wine, oyster sauce, white pepper, green onion, ginger, minced garlic, sugar and light soy sauce.

Method: Add the fresh shellfish to the seasoning sauce and marinate for 10 minutes, fry the chives and ginger in hot oil, then add the fresh shellfish and stir-fry quickly and evenly.

Efficacy: Broccoli is rich in carotene, which has anti-aging effects and promotes gastrointestinal peristalsis. Scallops are rich in vitamin E and have some antioxidant effects.

Stew lamb with radish

Ingredients: 750g lamb, 300g white radish, 5 red dates, a little cooking wine, salt, pepper, and ginger.

Method: Cut the lamb into cubes and stew it with white radish, red dates and ginger slices.

Efficacy: It could promote gastrointestinal peristalsis, improve digestion process, and have a certain effect of replenishing and keeping out the cold.



Congruent Communication at Work

It used to be a debatable topic whether or not to express your emotions at work. Some people may see it as a big 'no' because they worry that people may judge them as being weak and precious if they tell people how they feel. Some may think expressing their feelings might slow down work progress.

Nowadays people have become more aware of emotion and its related concepts. People have also become more familiar with looking at emotion from different perspectives and developed a better understanding of its impacts on an individual and the team if people hold on to it for too long.





This article will discuss this topic using American psychologist Virginia Stair's Congruent Communication theory. But let's look at some bad examples first. Stair suggests that Congruent Communication means to communicate congruently within oneself, with others and the context in order to have a genuine communication and flow of emotions. Without the congruence, it is likely to cause the following four situations:

Pleasing: when you ignore your needs, are afraid of conflicts and care too much about what others feel, you may subconsciously use 'people pleasing' type of communication. You might say to your manager: 'No worries, I'm not going to give you a hard time. I don't mind who gets the best employee award of the year.'

Blaming: Pleasing: when you ignore others and focus on protecting yourself, you might come across as blaming, for

example, when you get a new task assigned to you, you might react: 'why should I be doing this. I've been overloaded with work. You guys just pick the easiest job.' Ultra-rational: when you ignore the feelings of yourself and others, you may concentrate on business only and getting work done. For example, your colleague vents to you about a client and their poor attitude and wants some emotional support from you. The ultra-rational you might respond: 'don't worry about their attitude, let's just get the contract signed.'

Interrupt: when you don't feel like working in the moment, you may subconsciously remove yourself from the context. For example, in a project discussion meeting, you might say: 'let's park the project for now and talk about the new intern. How are they doing?'

Three Elements of Congruent Communication

Congruent Communication includes the self, others, and the context. It means to achieve a balance among these elements. But how do we have a congruent communication?

The self:

when we pay attention to ourselves, it means we express what we see and how we feel, and then talk about our own thoughts as well as what we want to see happen.

Others:

when we pay attention to others, it means to listen and respect their opinions. It also means to see things from their perspective and understand their viewpoints, feelings and needs.

The Context

This means the context where the communication takes place, including the purpose of the conversation, the relationships, the atmosphere and the setting.





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