



Community Acquired Pneumonia and COVID-19 Advice

NICE has published COVID 19 guidance on Community Acquired Pneumonia (CAP) in adults in community which you can find here: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng165>

Please familiarise yourself with the full guidance, but below are a few important points.

On diagnosing pneumonia and use of assessment tools:

1. Both CRB65 and ROTH have not been validated in COVID 19. Furthermore, there are concerns that ROTH may underestimate illness severity (see [the CEBM's rapid review of the use of the Roth score in remote assessment](#)). **For this reason, it is NOT recommended to guide decision making in COVID and CAP.**
2. [NEWS2 tool](#) in the community for predicting the risk of clinical deterioration may be useful
3. Where physical examination and other ways of making an objective diagnosis are not possible, the clinical diagnosis of community-acquired pneumonia of any cause in an adult can be informed by other clinical signs or symptoms such as:
 - Temperature above 38°C; respiratory rate above 20 breaths per minute; heart rate above 100 beats per minute; new confusion (see the [CEBM's rapid diagnosis of community-acquired pneumonia for clinicians](#)).
4. Tools such as the [Medical Research Council's dyspnoea scale](#) or the [CEBM's review of ways of assessing dyspnoea \(breathlessness\) by telephone or video](#) can be useful for remote consultations

On antibiotic treatment:

1. When starting antibiotic treatment, the first-choice oral antibiotic is:
 - doxycycline 200 mg on the first day, then 100 mg once a day for 5 days in total (not in pregnancy)
 - Alternative: amoxicillin 500 mg 3 times a day for 5 days.
2. Do not routinely use dual antibiotics
3. For choice of antibiotics in penicillin allergy, pregnancy and more severe disease, or if atypical pathogens are likely, see the [recommendations on choice of antibiotic in the NICE antimicrobial prescribing guideline on community-acquired pneumonia](#).
4. Where indicated, start antibiotic treatment as soon as possible, taking into account any different methods needed to deliver medicines to patients during the COVID-19 pandemic
5. Inappropriate antibiotic use may reduce availability if used indiscriminately, and broad-spectrum antibiotics in particular may lead to *C diff* infection and AMR.
6. Only offer an antibiotic when the likely cause is bacterial, or it is unclear whether the cause is bacterial or viral, and symptoms are more concerning/patient is at high risk of complications (i.e. older or frail, comorbidities, immunosuppression, significant heart or lung disease, severe illness following previous lung infection)



Registered office address: Suites 1 And 2, 5th Floor Kingsgate House,
Wellington Road North, Stockport, England, SK4 1LW
Company number 10700161