

Various Categories of Respiratory Tract Infections

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ABOUT THE STUDY

Lung illnesses are pathological conditions that affect the organs and tissues and interfere with gas exchange in animals that breathe air. They are also referred to as respiratory diseases. Affected structures include the trachea, bronchi, bronchioles, alveoli, pleurae, pleural cavity, nerves, and breathing muscles. From simple, self-limiting conditions like the common cold, influenza, and pharyngitis to serious, potentially fatal conditions including bacterial pneumonia, pulmonary embolism, tuberculosis, acute asthma, lung cancer, and severe acute respiratory syndromes like COVID-19. Respiratory illnesses can be categorized based on the organ or tissue affected the kind and pattern of the accompanying signs and symptoms, or even the underlying cause of the illness. A pulmonologist, a chest medicine expert, a respiratory medicine specialist, a respirologist, or a thoracic medicine specialist is a medical professional who focuses on respiratory diseases.

Respiratory tract infections

Any component of the respiratory system might get infected. Upper respiratory tract infections and lower respiratory tract infections are the two categories used to classify them.

Upper respiratory tract infection: The structures that connect the glottis to the mouth and nose are collectively referred to as the upper airway. The common cold is the most prevalent upper respiratory tract infection. Upper respiratory tract infections also include conditions including sinusitis, tonsillitis, otitis media, pharyngitis, and laryngitis that affect certain upper respiratory organs.

With a fatality incidence of 7% in adults and 1% in children, epiglottitis is a bacterial infection of the larynx that results in life-threatening swelling of the epiglottis. Even with immunizations, *Haemophilus influenzae* remains the main culprit. Also capable of causing epiglottitis is *Streptococcus pyogenes*. Drooling, stridor, trouble inhaling and swallowing, and a hoarse voice are some of the symptoms.

A viral infection of the vocal cords known as croup normally lasts five to six days. A barking cough and a low-grade fever are the major symptoms.

Croup can be identified on an X-ray by the "steeple sign," or constriction of the trachea. Children between the ages of 3 months and 5 years are most frequently affected during the winter months. Bacterial tracheitis is a serious condition brought on by bacteria.

Tonsillitis is a bacterial or viral infection that causes the tonsils to enlarge. Airway blockage may result from this inflammation. Peritonsillar abscess, the most frequent upper airway infection that usually affects young adults, can result from tonsillitis.

The uvula is pushed to the side that is unaffected as a result of one of the tonsils enlarging. Usually, a diagnosis is obtained after an examination and presentation. Fever, sore throat, difficulty swallowing, and a "hot potato" sound in the mouth are typical symptoms.

Lower respiratory tract infection: Pneumonia, an infection of the lungs typically brought on by bacteria, primarily *Streptococcus pneumoniae* in Western nations, is the most prevalent lower respiratory tract illness. Around the world, pneumonia is frequently brought on by tuberculosis. Other organisms, including viruses and fungi, can also cause pneumonia, including pneumocystis pneumonia, COVID-19, and severe acute respiratory syndrome. Infection-induced lung cavities, lung abscesses, or pneumonia spreading to the pleural cavity are all possible consequences of pneumonia. The germs from gum disease may enter the lungs and cause lower respiratory disease, therefore poor dental hygiene may be a contributing factor.

Upper and lower respiratory tract infection: A hereditary disease called primary ciliary dyskinesia makes the cilia move randomly. Chronic respiratory infections, a cough, and nasal congestion are brought on by this. This may result in bronchiectasis, which can result in potentially fatal breathing problems.

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