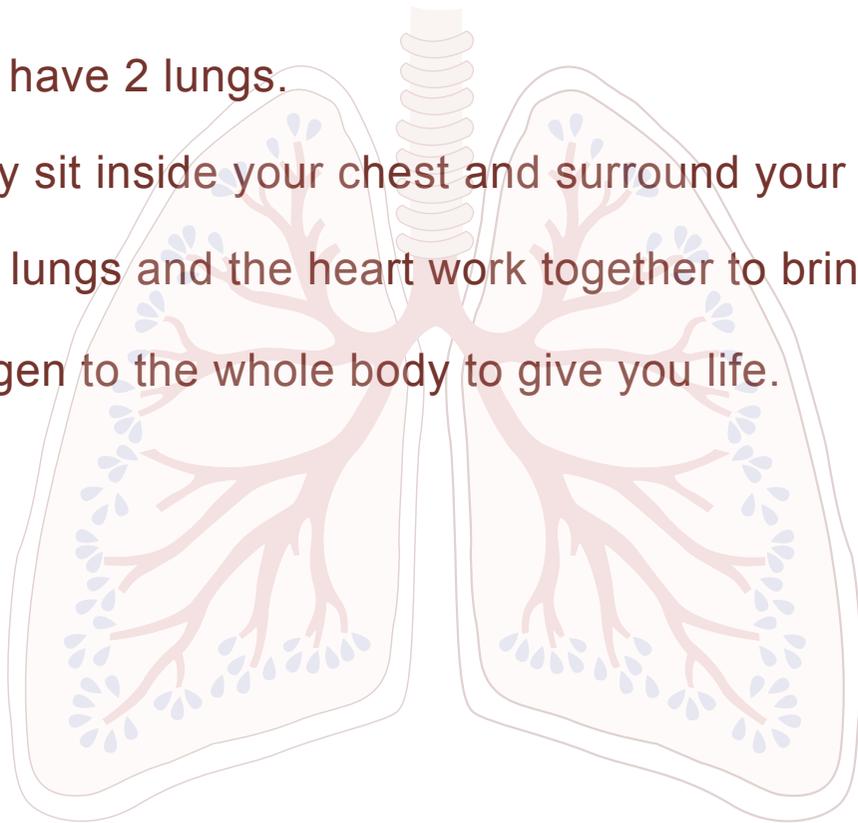


# What I need to know for my child hospitalised with **ACUTE LUNG SICKNESS**



# The Lungs

- You have 2 lungs.
- They sit inside your chest and surround your heart.
- The lungs and the heart work together to bring oxygen to the whole body to give you life.



# The Lungs

- The lungs look like an upside down tree.
- The tree trunk is like the windpipe (**trachea**).
- The 2 big branches are like the 2 main air tubes (**bronchi**).
- The smaller branches are like the smaller air tubes (**bronchioles**).
- The leaves are like the tiny air sacs (**alveoli**).



## Acute lung sickness: bronchiolitis and pneumonia

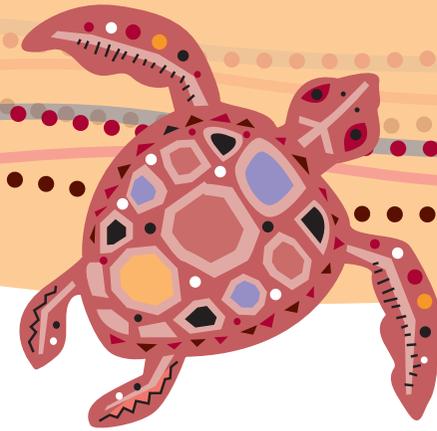
Bronchiolitis and pneumonia are chest infections that can make your child very sick.

Your child may have some or all of the following:

- High fever
- Fast or noisy breathing
- Trouble feeding and coughing a lot

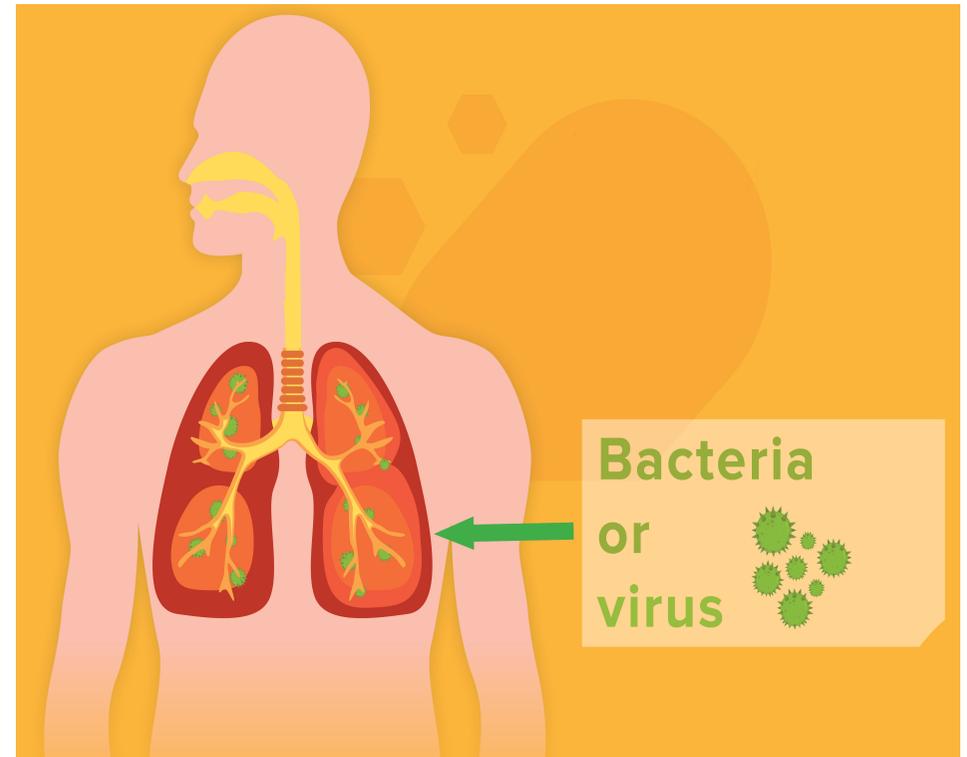
If your child has any of these sicknesses, take your child to clinic or hospital to be checked.





## What causes acute lung sickness?

- Bronchiolitis is usually caused by a virus.
- Pneumonia is sometimes caused by cold sick or hot sick which allows the germs to enter the lungs.
- The germs may be bacteria or viruses.
- The bacteria or virus can spread to other people by coughing, sneezing and touching surfaces that have germs on it.



# What can happen to my child's lungs if they went to hospital with lung sickness?

- If your child is in hospital for acute lung sickness, they may need oxygen and medicine to help them recover.
- If your child went to hospital for **acute lung sickness**, they are also at risk of getting **chronic lung sickness**, even after they recover from the acute lung sickness.



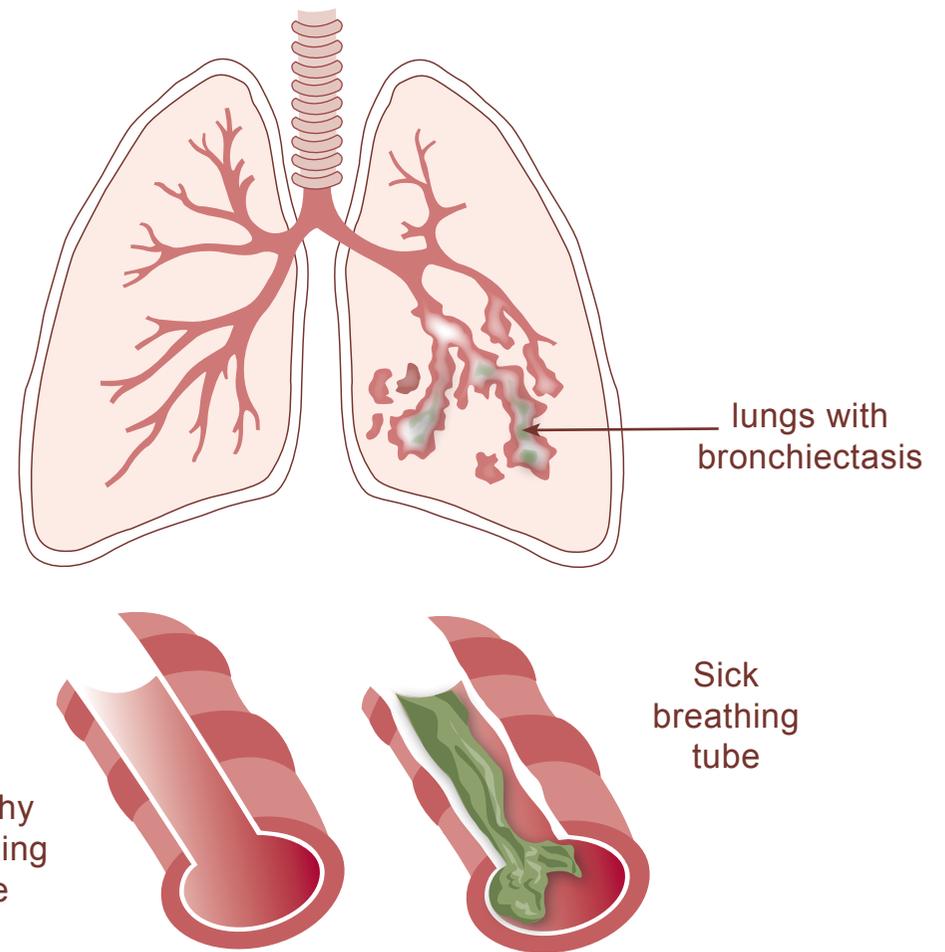
# What is chronic lung sickness?

- A bad lung sickness that lots of Aboriginal children have.
- The breathing tubes get damaged and stop working properly.
- Your child may have a wet sounding cough that last a long time.
- Apart from the wet cough that stays for a long time, there may not be any other signs to tell that the lungs are sick.



## What happens inside the lungs?

- The breathing tubes get damaged when the phlegm gets infected.
- Damaged airways causes lots more phlegm inside the breathing tubes.
- Sometimes it is hard to get rid of the phlegm and children cough a lot.



## What can you do?

- Listen to hear if your child has a wet cough, and for how long it lasts for.
- A wet cough, every day for 4 weeks means there could be an infection in the lung and it is important to see your doctor for a check.
- If your child is coughing up phlegm/spit/goonbee, please tell your doctor.
- It is important to follow up with a doctor 4 weeks after you get home to have your child's lungs checked.



## Bring your child to clinic:

- Tell your doctor about your child's cough and for how long they have been coughing.
- The health staff can check and help stop the coughing.
- Your child might need some antibiotics for the cough.
- If the health worker is not concerned about the cough, but your child has been coughing for more than 4 weeks, take someone with you who can help you tell the health worker.



## Why are healthy lungs important?

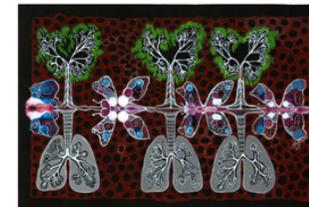
- The lungs in children are still growing, so we have to look after them.
- Strong lungs helps children grow strong, live strong, to play and learn.



This Lung Health in Children information book was developed in consultation with Telethon Kids Institute, Telethon Kids Kimberley, the Child and Adolescent Health Service, Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Service, Broome Aboriginal Medical Service, Western Australian Country Health Service, the Broome Aboriginal community, including St Mary's College (Primary) and the Menzies School of Health Research.



Government of **Western Australia**  
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NHMRC CRE in Lung Health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children

To order more resources or provide feedback please email: [Pam.Laird@telethonkids.org.au](mailto:Pam.Laird@telethonkids.org.au)

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