

# DID YOU KNOW?

## Germs in your mouth can cause pneumonia

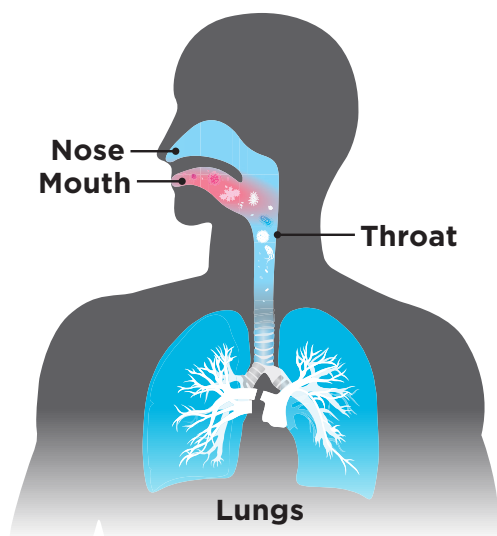
### IT'S TRUE

**Germs in your mouth can grow while you're in the hospital, leading to infection.** One of these infections, while rare, is **pneumonia**, an infection of the lungs.

Pneumonia can have serious consequences, such as:

- **Extra days in the hospital** (longer than 1 week) and additional medications
- **Spending time in the ICU**
- **Need for care at a skilled nursing facility**
- **Higher costs for your hospital stay**

### HOW CAN MOUTH GERMS CAUSE PNEUMONIA?



Mouth germs can reproduce **up to every 5 hours**.

**Germs in your mouth that cause pneumonia can get into the lungs** because there's a direct connection between your mouth and lungs.

## DON'T LET PNEUMONIA START IN YOUR MOUTH

A proven way YOU and your nurse  
can partner to prevent pneumonia is  
**TAKING CARE OF YOUR MOUTH**

## 3 EASY STEPS FOR ORAL HEALTH IN THE HOSPITAL:



**1. BRUSH** your teeth for 1-2 minutes after meals and at bedtime. Don't forget to brush your tongue!

Brushing removes sticky film in your mouth that contains bacteria.



**2. RINSE** with a mouthwash (30 seconds, as directed)

Rinsing kills bacteria and helps clean parts of the mouth that brushing can't reach.



**3. USE** a lip moisturizer

Using a non-petroleum-based lip moisturizer prevents cracked lips.

IF YOU DON'T HAVE ANY OF THESE ITEMS, ASK YOUR NURSE

**Brushing your teeth 3-4 times a day and using a rinse 2 times a day\* helps keep the overall germ load in your mouth low, which lowers the risk of acquiring pneumonia, and may help you avoid a longer stay in the hospital**

\*Or as directed by your health care professional.

**REMEMBER: A HEALTHY MOUTH IS PART OF HELPING YOUR BODY STAY HEALTHY**