

## About Pneumonia

Pneumonia is the single largest infectious cause of death in children worldwide. The most common cause of pneumonia is the pneumococcal bacterium, *streptococcus pneumoniae*.

While most healthy children can fight an infection from pneumococcal bacterium with their natural defenses, children whose immune systems are compromised by malnutrition or other stressors face a higher risk of developing pneumonia from a potential infection.

## Vaccination Strategy

The pneumococcal conjugate vaccine was developed to protect against the most common strains of pneumococcal bacteria. The widespread introduction of these vaccines marked a historic milestone in global health, as the shots were rapidly made available to children in under-resourced settings.

Now, the goal is to have countries incorporate the pneumococcal vaccine into routine immunization programs. Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance has already helped more than 60 countries consistently provide the vaccine, immunizing more than 215 million children in the process.

## Role of Shot@Life

Shot@Life advocates for U.S. government support for global childhood immunization programs, which includes funding for Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance—the world’s largest supplier of pneumococcal vaccines in low-income countries. In addition, Shot@Life raises funds and fosters private sector support for Gavi. Since the launch of the campaign, Shot@Life has raised enough money to provide the equivalent of more than 150,000 pneumococcal vaccines to children in developing countries.

### Sources (Updated 5/2021)

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance - [gavi.org/types-support/vaccine-support/pneumococcal](https://gavi.org/types-support/vaccine-support/pneumococcal)  
World Health Organization - [who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/pneumonia](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/pneumonia)

## Key Facts

Pneumonia is the **single largest cause of death** in children worldwide, accounting for **15% of all deaths of children under five years old**.

Pneumonia kills more than **500,000 children** every year.

Vaccination coverage rates for pneumonia reached **48% in 2018** — as high in the developing world as they are in Western countries.

