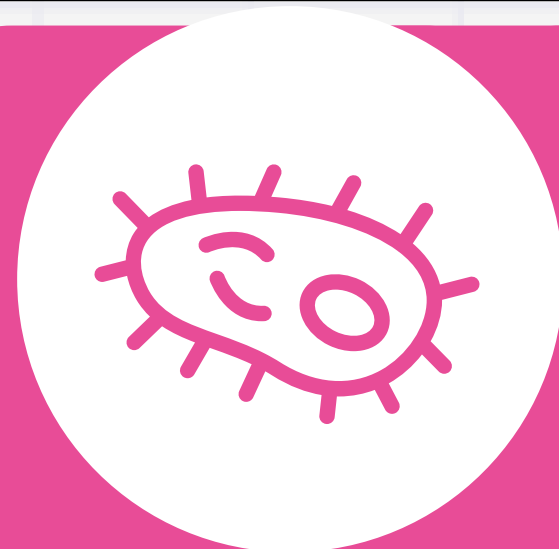




My Oh Mycoplasma!

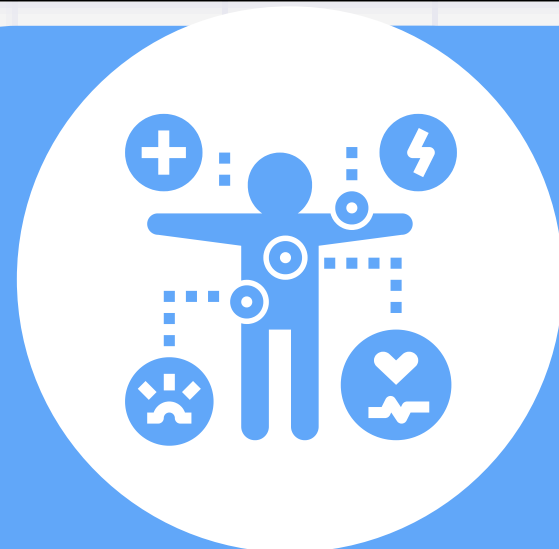
By: Annie Wirtz, PharmD, BCPPS

Infections caused by *Mycoplasma pneumoniae* are on the rise in the United States. Read about the symptoms and treatment of *M. pneumoniae* respiratory infections.



Bug Basics

Lack a cell wall
Known as "walking pneumonia"
Common cause of pneumonia > 5 years
Rarely causes infections outside of the respiratory tract



Symptoms

Range from mild to severe
Persistent cough lasting 3-4 weeks; wheezing
Diffuse OR focal infiltrates on X-ray
10% have a rash



Testing

PCR panels from respiratory samples are rapid & have high sensitivity/specificity
Caution as colonizes respiratory tract for weeks after infection
Serologic testing is available but PCR is preferred

Treatment

What Doesn't Work

Not treated with common antibiotics such as amoxicillin or amoxicillin/clavulanate (Augmentin).

What Works

Antibiotic treatment is **controversial** given unknown benefits.
For moderate-severe respiratory infections, **azithromycin** is first-line & resistance is rare in the US.

Alternatives

Doxycycline, levofloxacin, or moxifloxacin are alternatives that also cover typical pneumonia pathogens (e.g., *Streptococcus pneumoniae*).

QUESTIONS?

AntimicrobialStewards@cmh.edu

Additional References:

AAP. Mycoplasma pneumoniae infections. In: Red Book: 2024-2027 Report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases, 33rd ed. American Academy of Pediatrics, 2024:617-620.
CDC. Mycoplasma pneumoniae infection. <https://www.cdc.gov/mycoplasma/index.html>

