

Corticosteroids beneficial for adults with severe community-acquired pneumonia

Clinical Question	Compared to antibiotics with placebo or no treatment, how effective are corticosteroids (with antibiotics) in the treatment of community-acquired pneumonia (CAP)?
Bottom Line	In adults with severe CAP, corticosteroids reduced mortality (NNT=18), clinical failure, complication rates, length of hospitalisation, and time to clinical cure. People with non-severe CAP might benefit from corticosteroid therapy as well, but with no survival advantage. Regarding the latter, caution is required for people with diabetes due to the effect of corticosteroids on glucose control. The quality of the evidence for these conclusions was mostly moderate. Corticosteroid therapy was associated with more adverse events, especially hyperglycaemia, but the harm did not seem to outweigh the benefits.
Caveat	Among children with bacterial pneumonia, corticosteroids reduced early clinical failure rates (high-quality evidence) based on two small, clinically heterogeneous trials, and reduced time to clinical cure.
Context	Pneumonia is a common and potentially serious illness. Corticosteroids have been suggested for the treatment of different types of infection, however their role in the treatment of pneumonia remains unclear.
Cochrane Systematic Review	Stern A et al. Corticosteroids for pneumonia. Cochrane Reviews, 2017, Issue 12. Art. No.: CD007720. DOI: 10.1002/14651858. CD007720.pub3. This review contains 17 studies involving 2,264 participants.

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Cochrane systematic review link: <http://cochranelibrary-wiley.com/doi/10.1002/14651858.CD007720.pub3/full>