Journal of Population Therapeutics & Clinical Pharmacology

RESEARCH ARTICLE
DOI: 10.69980/f35pmz65

A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY OF THE CLINICAL AND BACTERIOLOGICAL PROFILE OF COMMUNITY ACQUIRED PNEUMONIA IN ADULT PATIENTS

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Abstract

Background: Community-acquired pneumonia (CAP) remains one of the most prevalent and potentially life-threatening infectious diseases affecting adults worldwide. Despite advances in diagnostic techniques and therapeutic interventions, CAP continues to impose a substantial burden on healthcare resources.

Objectives: To provide a comprehensive analysis of the clinical and bacteriological profile of adult patients diagnosed with CAP in a tertiary care hospital. To evaluate the prevalence of co-morbidities, the spectrum of causative agents, antimicrobial resistance patterns, and factors influencing clinical outcomes.

Methodology: A cross-sectional observational study was conducted over 18 months, enrolling 350 adults (>18 years old) with a confirmed diagnosis of CAP. Clinical assessments, laboratory investigations, radiological evaluations, and microbiological cultures were performed. Antimicrobial susceptibility testing was conducted for all isolates. Statistical analyses were performed.

Results: The study cohort had a mean age of 54.2 years, with a male predominance. The common symptoms included cough (92%), fever (87%), and dyspnea (70%). Co-morbidities were present in 69% of patients, with diabetes mellitus and COPD being the most frequent. Streptococcus pneumoniae was the leading pathogen (41%), followed by Haemophilus influenzae (15%) and atypical bacteria (12%). Resistance to beta-lactam antibiotics was notable, while fluoroquinolones and macrolides retained efficacy. Multi-lobar involvement, advanced age, co-morbidities, and delayed antibiotic therapy were significantly associated with increased mortality (9%).

Conclusion: CAP in adults displays significant diversity, with a considerable burden of co-morbidities and antimicrobial resistance. Early diagnosis, tailored empirical therapy based on local resistance patterns, and prompt management of underlying illnesses are crucial for improving outcomes mentioned above.

Keywords: Community-acquired pneumonia, clinical profile, bacteriological profile, antimicrobial resistance, adult, cross-sectional study..

Introduction

Community-acquired pneumonia (CAP) is defined as an acute infection of the pulmonary parenchyma acquired outside of hospitals or extended-care facilities. It remains a leading cause of morbidity and mortality among adults worldwide and is a significant public health challenge, especially in developing regions where healthcare resources may be limited. According to the World Health Organization, pneumonia accounts for approximately 15% of all deaths of children under 5, but it also poses a considerable risk to adults, particularly the elderly and those with chronic medical conditions1.

Globally, the incidence of CAP among adults ranges from 5 to 11 cases per 1,000 persons per year, with higher rates observed in populations aged above 65 years2. CAP is responsible for a substantial number of hospital admissions and is a leading cause of death from infectious diseases in developed and developing countries alike. In the United States, approximately 1.5 million adults are hospitalized annually for CAP, with an in-hospital mortality rate ranging from 5% to 15%3.

The presentation of CAP is highly variable, ranging from mild, self-limiting illness to severe, life-threatening disease requiring intensive care. Typical symptoms include cough, fever, dyspnea, sputum production, and pleuritic chest pain, but atypical presentations are not uncommon, especially in older adults and those with comorbidities. The clinical course of CAP is influenced by patient-specific factors such as age, presence of co-morbid illnesses (e.g., diabetes, COPD, malignancy), immune status, and lifestyle factors (e.g., smoking, alcohol use).

The causative organisms of CAP are diverse, with Streptococcus pneumoniae consistently reported as the most prevalent pathogen. Other common bacterial agents include Haemophilus influenzae, Staphylococcus aureus, and Gram-negative bacilli such as Klebsiella pneumoniae. Atypical organisms, including Mycoplasma pneumoniae, Chlamydia pneumoniae, and Legionella species, as well as respiratory viruses, also contribute to the disease spectrum. The identification of the responsible pathogen is often challenging due to limitations in diagnostic modalities and prior use of antibiotics.

The emergence of antimicrobial-resistant strains, particularly among S. pneumoniae and Gram-negative bacilli, has complicated the empirical management of CAP. Inappropriate or delayed initiation of appropriate antibiotics is linked to poor clinical outcomes, increased healthcare costs, and higher mortality. Surveillance of local microbial patterns and resistance profiles is essential to inform empirical therapy and optimize patient care.

While numerous studies have examined the clinical and microbiological features of CAP in Western populations, data from developing countries remain limited. Regional variations in pathogen prevalence, resistance patterns, and patient characteristics necessitate local studies to guide clinical practice. This cross-sectional study aims to bridge this gap by providing a comprehensive overview of the clinical and bacteriological profiles of CAP among adults in a tertiary care hospital in Andhra Pradesh, India.

Primary Objectives

1. To describe the clinical profile of adult patients presenting with community-acquired pneumonia (CAP), including symptomatology, physical findings, and underlying risk factors.
2. To identify the bacteriological spectrum of pathogens responsible for CAP among adults, utilizing microbiological diagnostic tools.
3. To determine the antibiotic susceptibility patterns of the isolated pathogens, assessing resistance and sensitivity profiles.

Secondary Objectives

1. To evaluate the prevalence and impact of co-morbid conditions (e.g., diabetes mellitus, COPD, chronic kidney disease) on the clinical progression and outcomes of CAP.
2. To analyze the factors associated with increased disease severity and mortality among adult patients with CAP, including age, radiological findings, laboratory markers, and delays in treatment initiation.

METHODS

Study Design

A cross-sectional, observational study was undertaken to analyze the clinical and bacteriological features of community-acquired pneumonia in adult patients. The study was conducted in the Department of Respiratory Medicine at Great Eastern Medical School and Hospital (GEMS&H), a tertiary care teaching hospital situated in Ragolu, Srikakulam, Andhra Pradesh, India. The facility serves a diverse urban and semi-urban population and is equipped with advanced diagnostic, laboratory, and critical care capabilities. The study was conducted over an 18-month period, spanning from July 2022 to December 2023.

Study Population

- **Inclusion Criteria:**
  - Adults aged 18 years and above.
  - Patients diagnosed with community-acquired pneumonia based on clinical features, supported by radiological and microbiological evidence.
  - Onset of symptoms occurring outside a hospital or long-term care facility.
- **Exclusion Criteria:**
  - Patients with hospital-acquired (nosocomial) pneumonia.
  - Immunocompromised individuals (e.g., those with HIV/AIDS, organ transplant recipients, patients on immunosuppressive therapy).
  - Recent hospitalization (within 14 days prior to the onset of symptoms).
  - Patients with a diagnosis of active pulmonary tuberculosis or other chronic pulmonary infections.

Sample Size Calculation

Based on preceding hospital records and regional epidemiological data reporting an average CAP prevalence of 5–10 per 1,000 adult population per year, and aiming for a confidence level of 95% with a margin of error of 5%, the calculated minimum sample size was 300. To account for potential dropouts or incomplete data, 350 patients were ultimately enrolled in the study.

Ethical Considerations

- The study protocol was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee of GEMS and the IEC number is 72a/IEC/GEMS&H/2019: dated 25.11.2019.
- Written informed consent was obtained from all participants or their legally authorized representatives.
- Patient confidentiality and data privacy were strictly maintained throughout the study.

Data Collection Procedures

- **Demographic and Socioeconomic Data**

Age, sex, occupation, educational status, residence (urban/rural), and socioeconomic status (classified as per Modified Kuppuswamy Scale).

- **Clinical Assessment**
  - Detailed history regarding presenting symptoms (cough, sputum production, fever, dyspnea, chest pain, hemoptysis, fatigue).
  - Duration of symptoms prior to hospital presentation.
  - History of co-morbid illnesses: diabetes, hypertension, COPD, asthma, chronic renal or liver disease, malignancy, alcoholism, smoking habits.
  - Physical examination: vital signs (temperature, pulse, blood pressure, respiratory rate, oxygen saturation), general examination, and detailed respiratory system assessment (inspection, palpation, percussion, auscultation).
- **Radiological Evaluation**
  - Chest radiography (posteroanterior and lateral views) for all patients.
  - High-resolution computed tomography (HRCT) was performed in selected cases (e.g., bilateral or multilobar involvement, poor response to initial therapy, suspicion of complications).
  - Radiological patterns documented: lobar consolidation, bronchopneumonia, interstitial infiltrates, pleural effusion, cavitation, or abscess.
- **Laboratory Investigations**
  - Complete blood count (CBC) with differential.
  - Erythrocyte sedimentation rate (ESR) and C-reactive protein (CRP).
  - Renal and liver function tests (serum creatinine, blood urea, transaminases, bilirubin).
  - Random blood sugar and HbA1c (for diabetic status assessment).
  - Arterial blood gas (ABG) analysis, especially in hypoxemic patients.
  - Serum electrolytes.
- **Microbiological Investigations**
  - Sputum Collection: Early morning, deep expectorated sputum samples collected prior to initiation of antibiotics wherever feasible. For non-productive cough, sputum induction using hypertonic saline was performed.
  - Gram Stain and Ziehl-Neelsen Stain: Initial microscopic examination to assess quality and for exclusion of tuberculosis.
  - Sputum Culture and Sensitivity: Cultured on blood agar, chocolate agar, and MacConkey agar plates. Identification of organisms as per standard protocols.
  - Blood Culture: Collected aseptically before starting antibiotics; incubated and observed for growth for up to 7 days.
  - Atypical Pathogens: Where clinically indicated and feasible, serological or PCR testing for atypical organisms (M. pneumoniae, C. pneumoniae, Legionella) was conducted.
  - Viral Detection: Limited to influenza virus rapid antigen testing during seasonal outbreaks.
- **Antibiotic Susceptibility Testing**

- Performed for all isolates using the Kirby-Bauer disc diffusion method and interpreted according to Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute (CLSI) guidelines.
- Antibiotics tested included: penicillins, cephalosporins (2nd, 3rd generation), macrolides (azithromycin, clarithromycin), fluoroquinolones (levofloxacin, moxifloxacin), tetracyclines, carbapenems, glycopeptides (vancomycin, linezolid).

➢ **Treatment and Outcome Documentation**

- Empirical antibiotic regimens and subsequent modifications based on culture/sensitivity.
- Need for oxygen supplementation, non-invasive or invasive mechanical ventilation.
- Admission to intensive care unit (ICU).
- Complications (respiratory failure, septic shock, acute kidney injury, etc.).
- Duration of hospital stay.
- Final outcome: recovery, discharge with improvement, or death.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Data was entered in Microsoft Excel and analyzed using SPSS version 25.0. Continuous variables were summarized as mean ± standard deviation (SD) or median (IQR) as appropriate. Categorical variables were presented as frequencies and percentages. Comparisons between groups were performed using Student's t-test or Mann-Whitney U test for continuous variables, and Chi-square or Fisher's exact test for categorical variables. Multivariate logistic regression analysis was used to identify independent predictors of severe disease and mortality. A p-value of <0.05 was considered statistically significant.

RESULTS

A total of 350 adult patients diagnosed with community-acquired pneumonia (CAP) were enrolled during the study period.

Characteristic	Value/Count (n=350)	Percentage (%)
Age (years)	Mean ± SD: 54.2 ± 16.3	-
Age groups		
18–29	45	12.9
30–44	65	18.6
45–64	142	40.6
≥65	98	28.0
Sex		
Male	203	58
Female	147	42
Residence		
Urban	221	63.1
Rural	129	36.9
Socioeconomic status		
Low	137	39.1
Middle	173	49.4
High	40	11.4

Symptom	Number	Percentage (%)
Cough	322	92
Fever	305	87
Sputum production	210	60
Dyspnea	245	70
Chest pain	105	30
Hemoptysis	19	5
Fatigue	198	57
Anorexia	78	22
Nausea/Vomiting	45	13
Confusion/Delirium	25	7

Mean duration of symptoms before presentation: **5.1 ± 2.1 days** (range: 2–12 days).

Table 3: Physical Examination Findings

Finding	Number	Percentage (%)
Temperature >38°C	195	56
Respiratory rate >20/min	190	54
Tachycardia (>100 bpm)	165	47
Hypotension (SBP <90 mmHg)	30	9
Hypoxemia (SpO_2 <90%)	105	30
Rales/Crepitations	280	80
Bronchial breath sounds	70	20

Co-morbidities

Table 4: Distribution of Co-morbidities

Co-morbidity	Number	Percentage (%)
Diabetes mellitus	134	38.3
COPD	95	27.1
Chronic kidney disease	26	7.4
Heart failure	25	7.1
Malignancy	11	3.1
Alcoholism	45	12.9
Current/Former smoking	108	30.9
No co-morbidities	110	31.4

Note: Many patients had multiple co-morbidities.

Radiological Findings

Table 5: Chest X-ray/HRCT Results

Radiological Finding	Number	Percentage (%)
Unilateral consolidation	245	70
Bilateral involvement	75	21
Multi-lobar consolidation	62	18
Pleural effusion	40	11
Cavitation/abscess	7	2
Interstitial infiltrates	18	5

Laboratory Findings

Table 6: Laboratory Parameters

Parameter	Value (Mean ± SD / Median (IQR))	Abnormal (%)
WBC count (x10³/μL)	13.2 ± 5.8	Leukocytosis (63)
Neutrophil percentage (%)	78.4 ± 14.2	Neutrophilia (61)
Platelet count (x10³/μL)	210 ± 65	Thrombocytopenia (11)
CRP (mg/L)	26.7 ± 12.1	Elevated (82)
ESR (mm/hr)	45 (28–62)	Elevated (71)
PaO_2 (mmHg)	68.4 ± 14.3	Hypoxemia (<60) (25)
Serum creatinine (mg/dl)	1.2 ± 0.5	Elevated (8)
Random blood glucose (mg/dL)	116 ± 38	Hyperglycemia (19)

Microbiological Profile

Table 7: Pathogens Isolated

Pathogen	Number	Percentage (%)
Streptococcus pneumoniae	144	41
Haemophilus influenzae	52	15
Klebsiella pneumoniae	29	8
Staphylococcus aureus	24	7
Atypical bacteria (Mycoplasma, Chlamydia, Legionella)	42	12
Pseudomonas aeruginosa	12	3
Mixed infection	21	6
No growth (culture negative)	26	8

- **Blood culture positivity:** 38 patients (11%)
- **Sputum culture positivity:** 310 patients (89%)
- **Atypical pathogens:** Detected by serology/PCR, most common: Mycoplasma pneumoniae (65% of atypical cases)

Antibiotic Susceptibility

Table 8: Antibiotic Sensitivity Profile

Pathogen	Most Resistant To	Most Sensitive To
Streptococcus pneumoniae	Penicillins (39%), Amoxicillin (22%)	Levofloxacin (97%), Azithromycin (86%)
Haemophilus influenzae	Ampicillin (28%)	Cefuroxime (90%), Azithromycin (85%)
Klebsiella pneumoniae	3rd Gen Cephalosporins (31%)	Carbapenems (100%)
Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA)	Oxacillin/Cefoxitin (all MRSA)	Vancomycin, Linezolid (100%)
Pseudomonas aeruginosa	Ceftazidime (25%)	Piperacillin-tazobactam (92%)

Multidrug resistance was common in S. pneumoniae and Gram-negative isolates. 8 MRSA isolates identified, all sensitive to vancomycin and linezolid.

Treatment Details

- **Empirical therapy:** Most patients initially received beta-lactam plus macrolide or fluoroquinolone.
- **Modification based on culture:** 72 patients (21%) required escalation or change of antibiotics.
- **Adjunctive therapies:** Oxygen supplementation (55%), non-invasive ventilation (11%), invasive ventilation (8%).

Clinical Outcomes

Table 9: Outcome Measures

Outcome Parameter	Number	Percentage (%)
Mean hospital stays (days)	7.8 ± 2.3	-
ICU admissions	56	16
Mechanical ventilation required	28	8
Recovered and discharged	318	91
Mortality	32	9

Factors Associated with Increased Mortality (Statistical Analysis)

- **Age >65 years:** Odds Ratio (OR) 2.7, 95% CI: 1.6–4.2, $p<0.01$
- **Multi-lobar involvement:** OR 3.2, 95% CI: 2.0–5.1, $p<0.001$
- **Co-morbidities (any):** OR 2.1, 95% CI: 1.3–3.6, $p=0.005$
- **Blood culture positivity:** OR 3.9, 95% CI: 2.1–7.2, $p<0.001$
- **Delayed antibiotic initiation (>48h):** OR 1.8, 95% CI: 1.0–3.3, $p=0.046$

Complications

- **Septic shock:** 17 cases (5%)
- **Acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS):** 13 cases (4%)
- **Acute kidney injury:** 11 cases (3%)
- **Empyema:** 6 cases (2%)
- **Other (cardiac arrhythmia, DIC, etc.):** 4 cases (1%)

DISCUSSION

Community-acquired pneumonia (CAP) continues to be a major public health problem, presenting with a broad spectrum of clinical manifestations and driven by a dynamic range of bacterial pathogens. This study, conducted in a diverse adult population over 18 months, provides a granular analysis of the clinical and bacteriological landscape of CAP, with special focus on resistance patterns, co-morbidities, and outcome determinants. The findings underscore the evolving challenges in diagnosing and managing CAP, particularly in the face of antimicrobial resistance and an aging population with increasing co-morbidity burdens.

The age distribution in our study aligns with global data, confirming an increased susceptibility among middle-aged and older adults[2,3]. The mean age (54.2 years) and the significant proportion of patients aged ≥65 years (28%) reflect the demographic shift towards an older population at risk for CAP. Our finding that 58% of patients were male is consistent with previous reports suggesting a modest male predominance, potentially linked to higher rates of smoking, alcohol use, and occupational exposures among men in many societies[4]. Urban residents made up the majority of cases, possibly due to higher healthcare-seeking behavior and better access to hospital-based services. However, rural patients still accounted for over a third of cases, emphasizing that CAP is not confined to urban centers and that diagnostic and therapeutic resources must extend to all communities.

Cough, fever, and dyspnea were the most frequently reported symptoms, present in over two-thirds of patients. These findings are in agreement with established criteria for clinical suspicion of CAP[5]. Sputum production, chest pain, and fatigue were also prevalent, underscoring the need for clinicians to consider CAP in any adult patient with compatible respiratory and systemic symptoms. The presence of confusion or delirium in a subset of patients (7%)—predominantly elderly—highlights the atypical presentations of CAP in this demographic[6]. Notably, the mean pre-hospital symptom duration (5.1 days) suggests potential delays in care-seeking, which is a recognized predictor of adverse outcomes[7].

Co-morbidities were highly prevalent (69%), with diabetes mellitus and COPD leading the list. These conditions are well-known to impair pulmonary defences and immune response, predisposing individuals to both infection and a complicated course. Our finding of a 2.1-fold increase in mortality among those with any co-morbidity is supported by similar results in large cohort studies[8]. The high prevalence of current or former smokers (30.9%) and alcoholics (12.9%) further illustrates the importance of lifestyle factors as modifiable risk contributors to CAP.

Unilateral consolidation was the most common radiological finding (70%), while multi-lobar involvement (18%) was strongly correlated with severe disease and mortality (OR 3.2, $p < 0.001$). Bilateral disease and pleural effusion were additional markers of severity. The value of chest radiography in diagnosing and stratifying CAP severity is thus reaffirmed, though the addition of HRCT in selected cases improved detection of subtle or complicated disease.

Laboratory findings of leucocytosis, neutrophilia, and elevated inflammatory markers (CRP, ESR) were typical, though non-specific, and their presence alone should not guide management without clinical context. Notably, hypoxemia (PaO_2 <60 mmHg) was present in 25% of patients and was a significant predictor of ICU admission and adverse outcomes.

S. pneumoniae remained the dominant pathogen (41%), consistent with international data[2,4]. Despite widespread vaccination efforts in some settings, the high prevalence in our cohort may reflect limited adult vaccine coverage, suboptimal herd immunity, or changing pneumococcal serotype distribution. The association of S. pneumoniae with severe disease, bacteremia, and increased mortality highlights the continued need to prioritize its detection and targeted therapy.

Haemophilus influenzae (15%) and Klebsiella pneumoniae (8%) were frequent, with the latter showing a disproportionate representation among patients with alcoholism and underlying lung disease. The emergence of Gram-negative organisms as CAP pathogens is of concern, particularly in regions with high antibiotic use and healthcare-associated transmission risks[9]. Atypical pathogens collectively accounted for 12% of cases, in keeping with global estimates. Mycoplasma pneumoniae was the most common among these. The detection of atypical organisms, while limited by diagnostic resources, is clinically relevant, as these pathogens are not susceptible to beta-lactams and require macrolide or fluoroquinolone therapy. Mixed infections (6%) were also identified, underscoring the complex microbiological landscape of CAP.

The low yield of positive cultures (sputum 89%, blood 11%)—and 8% of all cases being culture-negative—may be attributed to prior antibiotic exposure, suboptimal sample quality, or limitations of conventional diagnostic techniques. This is a common challenge in CAP studies and supports the need for advanced molecular diagnostics. The study highlights an alarming rate of antimicrobial resistance among common CAP pathogens. S. pneumoniae showed significant resistance to penicillins (39%) and amoxicillin (22%), though it retained high sensitivity to levofloxacin and azithromycin. H. influenzae also displayed resistance to ampicillin (28%) but remained susceptible to cefuroxime and macrolides. Gram-negative organisms, particularly K. pneumoniae, exhibited resistance to third-generation cephalosporins (31%), echoing concerns about ESBL-producing strains. Methicillin-resistant S. aureus (MRSA) was identified in 8 cases, all of which responded to vancomycin and linezolid. The rising prevalence of MRSA and multidrug-resistant Gram-negatives in community settings has been documented worldwide[10], further complicating empirical therapy. These findings underscore the critical importance of local surveillance data in guiding empirical antibiotic choices. Overuse and misuse of antibiotics in the community and primary care settings likely contribute to these resistance patterns, highlighting the need for stewardship programs.

Empirical therapy most commonly involved a beta-lactam plus a macrolide or fluoroquinolone, modified as indicated by culture and sensitivity results. The need for escalation or change (21%) illustrates the challenge of empirical therapy in the face of rising resistance. Adjunctive therapies, including oxygen supplementation and ventilatory support, were required in a significant proportion of patients, reflecting the potential severity of CAP.

The mean hospital stay (7.8 days) and ICU admission rate (16%) are comparable to those reported in similar cohorts. The 9% mortality rate is within the global range for hospitalized CAP[3,5], though it remains unacceptably high for a treatable illness. Predictors of mortality in our study—advanced age, co-morbidities, multi-lobar involvement, blood culture positivity, and delayed antibiotic initiation—are well-established in the literature and reinforce the need for early, aggressive intervention in high-risk patients. Complications such as septic shock, ARDS, acute kidney injury, and empyema, though infrequent, were associated with increased length of stay, resource use, and poor outcomes. These

findings highlight the multi-system impact of severe CAP and the need for comprehensive, multidisciplinary management.

Our findings are largely concordant with those reported in multicenter studies and meta-analyses from both resource-rich and resource-limited settings[4,11]. However, the relatively high rates of antimicrobial resistance and the significant burden of Gram-negative and atypical pathogens suggest evolving microbiological trends in our region, possibly influenced by environmental, behavioral, and healthcare system factors. The prevalence of co-morbidities, particularly diabetes and COPD, also reflects broader epidemiological transitions and the growing challenge of noncommunicable diseases as risk factors for infectious diseases.

- **Public Health and Clinical Implications**

  The data underscore several urgent needs:

  - **Strengthening vaccination programs** (e.g., pneumococcal and influenza vaccines) for at-risk adults.
  - **Promoting antimicrobial stewardship** to contain resistance.
  - **Improving early detection and risk stratification,** notably for elderly and co-morbid patients.
  - **Expanding diagnostic capacity,** including molecular and rapid point-of-care tests for atypical and resistant pathogens.
  - **Educating patients and providers** about early care-seeking and recognition of CAP symptoms.

Strengths and Limitations

Strengths:

- Large, well-defined study population and comprehensive data capture across clinical, laboratory, and microbiological domains.
- Use of standardized diagnostic and treatment protocols.
- Detailed analysis of resistance patterns and outcome predictors.

Limitations:

- Single-center design may limit the generalizability of findings to other regions.
- Conventional culture techniques may underestimate the prevalence of fastidious or atypical organisms; limited use of molecular diagnostics due to cost constraints.
- Study did not include viral pathogens (except for limited influenza testing), which are increasingly recognized as important CAP etiologies.
- No long-term follow-up post-discharge for assessment of functional outcomes and late mortality.

Directions for Future Research

Multi-center studies with larger patient cohorts, inclusion of advanced molecular diagnostics, and integration of viral pathogen surveillance are needed to further elucidate the changing epidemiology

of CAP. Longitudinal studies examining long-term recovery, quality of life, and risk of recurrent pneumonia in survivors are also warranted. Implementation research focusing on vaccination, early warning systems, and antimicrobial stewardship would provide valuable insights for policy and practice.

Conclusion

Community-acquired pneumonia (CAP) in adults presents significant diagnostic and therapeutic challenges, particularly in populations with co-morbidities. The clinical spectrum of CAP includes cough, fever, and dyspnoea, with older adults and those with chronic illnesses at higher risk for complications and mortality. Effective management relies on early identification and risk stratification. While Streptococcus pneumoniae remains the primary pathogen, rising importance of Haemophilus influenzae and resistance trends indicate a complex microbial landscape. Culture positivity in blood serves as a severity marker, with growing antibiotic resistance impacting treatment efficacy. First-line antibiotics may be less effective; judicious use of fluoroquinolones and macrolides is recommended. Early intervention is critical, as delays in appropriate therapy correlate with higher mortality. A mortality rate of 9% underscores the seriousness of CAP, with predictors of poor outcomes including advanced age and delays in therapy. Serious complications stress healthcare resources. Public health efforts should prioritize vaccination, antimicrobial stewardship, and educational programs. Investment in rapid diagnostic infrastructure is essential. Future research should focus on multicentric studies and long-term outcomes to better understand CAP. In conclusion, addressing CAP requires an integrated approach emphasizing early detection, personalized treatment, and preventive public health measures to mitigate its impact and combat antimicrobial resistance.

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