

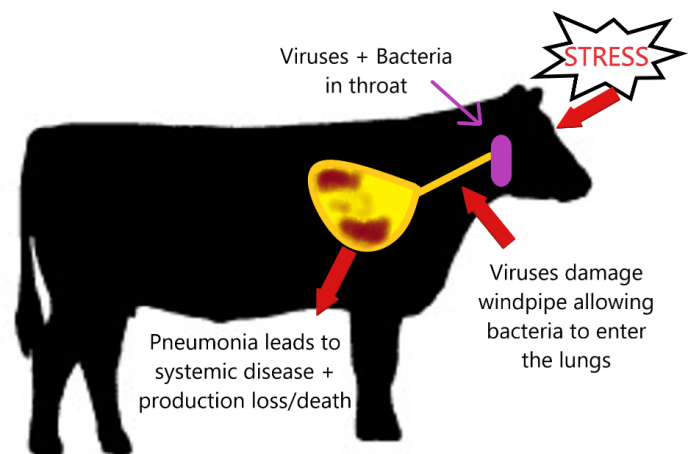
# Pneumonia

Pneumonia is an inflammation of the lungs caused by an infectious agent. Multiple factors can contribute to the onset of Pneumonia in cattle and it is commonly associated with Bovine Respiratory Disease (BRD) particularly in feedlot cattle. In more extensive systems, calves and weaners are most susceptible.

## Cause

For BRD to occur generally three things are present: stress + virus + bacteria. Factors that contribute to BRD are:

- Stress due to handling or transport
- Extremes of temperature (hot or cold)
- Immunocompromised animals
- Sick animals not being isolated
- Overstocking
- Change in diet eg. weaning
- Inadequate ventilation
- Poor hygiene/drainage
- Dust or other respiratory irritants
- Presence of certain viruses or bacteria which opportunistically colonise lungs



Process of cattle succumbing to BRD. Source: [NSW LLS](#)

Pneumonia initiating viruses found in cattle are infectious bovine rhinotracheitis (IBR), bovine respiratory syncytial virus (BRSV), parainfluenza 3 (P13) and Pestivirus (BVDV).

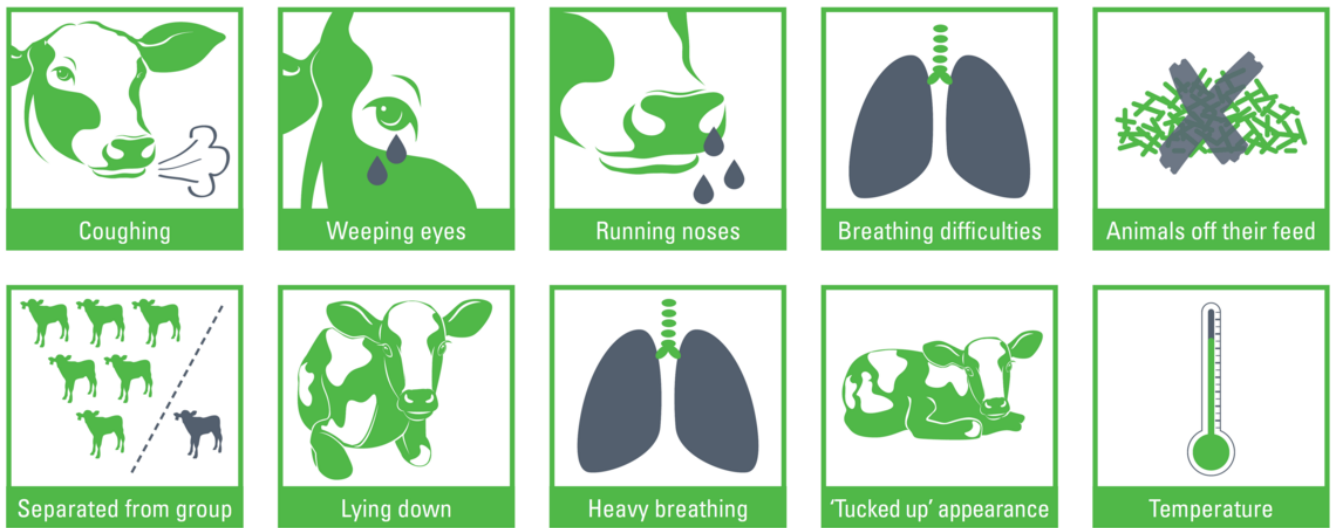
Bacteria that can be involved in pneumonia in cattle are *Mannheimia hemolytica*, *Pasteurella multocida*, *Histophilus somni*, *Salmonella* spp., and *Mycoplasma* spp.

## Signs

Initial symptoms can be difficult to detect however, an elevated temperature (>39.5 C) is the first sign of pneumonia.

While mortalities can occur in severely affected stock, production losses such as reduced feed intake and reductions in daily weight gain are common.

Other signs include:



Clinical signs of pneumonia. Source: [MSD Animal Health Hub](#)

## Treatment

- Isolate affected animals in a well-ventilated area protected from excessive cold or heat; maintain hydration and give easy access to water and feed.
- It is important to keep physical stress of an animal affected by pneumonia to a minimum.
- Under veterinary advice, treatment also involves anti-inflammatories which help to reduce fever and antibiotics which are targeted to the specific bacteria causing the problem. Do not use any antibiotic for the treatment of Pneumonia as identification of the specific bacteria is needed to treatment. General penicillin will only prolong the duration of the disease.

## Prevention

- Ask lots of questions when buying new stock and vaccinate against respiratory pathogens with either Bovishield or Bovilis.
- Stress management and prevention, particularly during the first few weeks of cattle being on a feedlot or new property.
- Familiarising young stock with the conditions of a feedlot or new yard environment on your property by regular handling and rewards (yard training).
- Monitor animal health and behaviour closely particularly calves. Fever, cloudy nasal discharge, shallow breathing and coughing are some common clinical signs of pneumonia or BRD.



**Further Resources**



STOCK  
PNEUMO  
SENSE

**Victorian Farmers Federation**

Farrer House, Level 3, 24 Collins St  
Melbourne VIC 3000

Telephone: 1300 882 833

Email: [stocksense@vff.org.au](mailto:stocksense@vff.org.au)

Website: [www.vff.org.au/stock-sense/](http://www.vff.org.au/stock-sense/)

See our website for information disclaimer\*

---