

Cervical Adenitis

What is cervical adenitis?

Cervical adenitis is an infection of a lymph node in the neck. Lymph nodes are part of the immune system and help fight infections.

Another term for this infection is lymphadenitis.

What is the cause?

Bacteria or viruses in the nose, tonsils, or adenoids can spread to the lymph nodes and cause an infection. Bacteria may also spread from an infected tooth or from an infection in another part of the body.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms may include:

- Swelling or tenderness of one or more lymph nodes
- Sore or red skin in the area of the affected lymph nodes
- Pain when you swallow
- Pain when you move your neck

How is it diagnosed?

Your healthcare provider will ask about your symptoms and medical history and examine you. You will have blood tests to look for signs of infection, including mononucleosis. You may have a strep test or throat culture. If the node is very swollen or you have severe pain, you may have an X-ray or CT scan of the neck.

How is it treated?

Lymph node infections caused by bacteria can be treated with antibiotic medicine. More severe infections may need to be treated with IV antibiotics in the hospital. Sometimes, if the infection becomes an abscess and is full of pus, the infection will need to be opened and drained.

How can I take care of myself?

- Use acetaminophen or ibuprofen for fever or pain. Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medicines (NSAIDs), such as ibuprofen, may cause stomach bleeding and other problems. These risks increase with age. Read the label and take as directed. Unless recommended by your healthcare provider, do not take this medicine for more than 10 days for any reason.
- If your healthcare provider outlined the lymph node with a pen, tell your provider if the size of the lymph node or redness is growing beyond the markings.

- If the infection was drained, follow your provider's instructions for taking care of the wound.
- Ask your healthcare provider:
 - How and when you will hear your test results
 - How long it will take to recover
 - What activities you should avoid and when you can return to your normal activities
 - How to take care of yourself at home
 - What symptoms or problems you should watch for and what to do if you have them
- Make sure you know when you should come back for a checkup.

How can I help prevent cervical adenitis?

There is no specific way to avoid cervical adenitis. It can help, however, to do what you can to stay healthy and practice good hygiene, especially by washing your hands often.

Developed by RelayHealth.

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