



[Nigerian Auctions](#)
Buy and Sell anything at Africa's Largest Market Place.
[Vapals Nigerian Dating](#)

- [Home](#)
- [News](#)
- [Features](#)
- [Politics](#)
- [Business](#)
- [Sports](#)
- [Entertainment](#)
- [Technology](#)
- [Editorial](#)
- [Columns](#)
- [Forum](#)
- [Viewpoints](#)
- [Financial Vanguard](#)

[Home](#) » [Features](#) » [Health](#) » Pneumonia is Nigeria's silent child killer

Pneumonia is Nigeria's silent child killer

Written by Dr. Adegoke Falade & Dr. Kikelomo Osinusi
Tuesday, 20 January 2009

Nigeria is the economic and political powerhouse of West Africa. It is Africa's most populous nation and one of the wealthiest countries on the continent. Despite this, Nigeria has one of the highest child mortality rates in Africa. Currently, one out of every five Nigerian children dies before their fifth birthday. And what disease is responsible for more deaths than any other? Childhood pneumonia.

As paediatricians, we are deeply concerned by the toll that childhood pneumonia exacts on our nation. Deaths from this disease are even more tragic because they are largely preventable.

Today, we are gathering with Nigeria's leading child health experts at the Paediatric Association of Nigeria Conference (PANCONF) in Ibadan to deliberate the challenges of child health in the 21st Century. Here, we are attempting to inject a sense of urgency into discussions about how to reduce child mortality.

According to UNICEF, preventing childhood pneumonia is critical to reaching the Millennium Development Goal 4 target of reducing child deaths. Consequently, many of our discussions will focus on childhood pneumonia. This disease is a leading cause of child death worldwide, killing more than two million children each year. In Nigeria, that translates to an estimated 200,000 annual deaths.

The good news is that vaccines against two major causes of childhood pneumonia are available. Along with other prevention techniques, such as exclusive breast feeding, zinc supplementation, reducing indoor air pollution and using antibiotics, vaccines have the potential to help accelerate our fight against child pneumonia.

Haemophilus influenzae type B (Hib) and pneumococcus are the leading cause(s) of life-threatening childhood pneumonia in this region, accounting for about half of all cases.

In April 2008, Uganda announced that it had prevented an estimated 28,000 cases of pneumonia and meningitis and 5000 deaths each year due to Hib. It accomplished this through the introduction of vaccine against Hib.

Meanwhile, a vaccine that protects against pneumococcus will be introduced nationwide in several African countries this year, including South Africa, the Gambia and Rwanda. The GAVI Alliance, an international partnership devoted to funding child health initiatives, has already approved six African countries for introduction of the vaccine, which was shown to prevent 16 per cent of all child deaths when given routinely in a clinical trial in the Gambia.

A study in South Africa even showed the vaccine to be highly effective in HIV positive populations. Both Hib and pneumococcal conjugate vaccine(s) are recommended by the World Health Organization, and many African countries already use or are planning to introduce both vaccines.

Although such vaccines are available on the private market in Nigeria, they rarely reach the children who are at highest risk of dying of these diseases. Developing countries can purchase vaccines against preventable diseases like Hib and pneumococcus with support from the GAVI Alliance at a cost between 15 and 30 cents per dose.

As we face the challenges of child health in the 21st century, we must protect Nigeria's most vulnerable children from needless diseases. Indeed, we already have the resources and support required to do so.

As members of the Paediatric Association of Nigeria, we hope the messages arising from the PANCONF meeting this week raise awareness of pneumonia among the government, health institutions, paediatricians, and parents in this country. And, following this meeting, we hope that those in power take urgent steps to reduce this disease's impact. Let's renew our focus on Nigeria's promising future by investing in those who will drive it—our children.

•Dr. Adegoke Falade is the Head of the Department of Paediatrics, College of Medicine, University of Ibadan. Dr. Kikelomo Osinusi is the Head of the PANCONF 2009 Local Organizing Committee.



Only registered users can write comments.
Please login or register.

[Add as favourites](#) (5) | [Quote this article on your site](#) | Views: 131

Username

Password

Remember me

[Lost Password?](#)
No account yet? [Register](#)

Ads by Google

[Own A Land Without Money](#)
Land Ownership tips for Nigerians with little or no money guaranteed!
[MafiaLandLord.com](#)

[Natural Anemia Treatment](#)
Rid Yourself of Anemia Quickly! No Side Effects, Results Guaranteed
[www.AnemiaAnswer.com](#)

[Is It Pneumonia?](#)
Symptoms, causes of pneumonia, walking pneumonia. Tips for relief.
[www.HealthInfoArticles.com](#)

[Sell your goods online](#)
Fastest way to sell in Nigeria Registration is fast and free!
[www.boostsale.com](#)

[Find True Love in Nigeria](#)
Register, Search and Make Contact. Create a Profile for Free
[www.alarena.com](#)

Advertisement

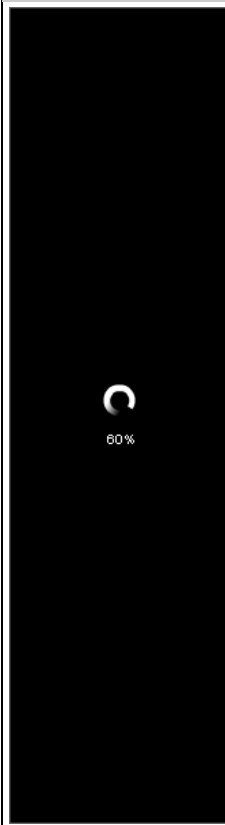
Copy This Idea And Start Making N650,000+ Monthly Beginning From Today!

This Simple Business Has Made Me N650,000+ In One Month By Learning Where To Find Unique Information And Making It Available To Particular Groups Of People. Easy, Simple, Quick Setup. Completely Legitimate. No Scam!

[Get Report For FREE Here!](#)

GET CATFISH BUYERS @
[www.FishFarmersMeetBuyers.com](#) Get BIG Catfish buyers; Connect Broodstock, Table-size, Fingerlings & Juvenile Producers; Get Catfish Manual, Fish Consultants, Fish Feed/Tools & Machine Dealers, Join Farmer's forum online to share experiences/ask questions etc

FxPro.com - Trade Forex Like a



- Links**
- [MyNaijaNews Naija lifestyle, sports, music and reviews, fashion, gsm reviews, greeting cards, etc.....It's your content. go get it.....](#)
 - [Who is Goldie? Nigerian pop diva, humanitarian, entertainer, woman rights activist? click here to find out..](#)
 - [Technical Committee on the Niger Delta The Online Forum is still open. Click here](#)

Be the first to comment on this article



Pro
Flexible leverage up to 1:500
Low spreads from 1.8 pips
www.FxPro.com

[Back]

[Nigerian Auctions](#)

Buy and Sell anything at Africa's Largest Market Place.



[Naijapals Nigerian Dating](#)

Discover Nigeria & Nigerians On Naijapals, Meet New People

Ads by Google

INTERESTED IN CATFISH FARMING?

Avoid costly mistakes & huge losses

[CLICK HERE](#)

To buy Catfish Manual titled "The A-Z Of Catfish Farming With Low Start-up Funds"

**Reader-friendly;
Comprehensive;
Pictorial**

Links

[MyNaijaNews](#)

Naija entertainment, lifestyle, sports, music reviews, fashion, technology, mobile phone reviews, books, classified ads, greeting cards, etc....It's your content.
[go get it.....](#)

[Technical Committee on the Niger Delta](#)

The Online Forum is still open.
[Click here](#)

© 2009 Vanguard Media Limited
Comments made by visitors to this site do not reflect the opinion of Vanguard.
Designed & Managed by