

Pleural effusion is excess fluid that accumulates in the pleural cavity, the fluid-filled space that surrounds the lungs. Excessive amounts of such fluid can impair breathing by mass effect, limiting the expansion of the lungs during ventilation. Various kinds of pleural effusion, depending on the nature of the fluid and what caused its entry into the pleural space, are hydrothorax (serous fluid), hemothorax (blood), chylothorax (chyle), or pyothorax (pus). Pneumothorax is the accumulation of air in the pleural space.

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