

WHAT IS RESPIRATORY SYNCYTIAL VIRUS (RSV)?

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)

is a common respiratory virus that causes colds but can be severe for infants and older adults. RSV is the most common cause of hospitalization in children under age 1 year.



HOW DOES RSV SPREAD?

RSV can spread when someone with the virus sneezes or coughs. It can also spread through close contact with a sick person or by touching infected surfaces that have the virus on them and then touching your face without washing your hands.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF RSV?

People with RSV infection typically have fever, cough, congestion, runny nose, wheezing—and in very young infants—increased irritability and difficulty breathing. Seek medical care right away if your child has:

- Difficulty breathing (ex: fast breathing, flaring nostrils, etc.)
- Not able to drink enough fluids, having symptoms of dehydration (ex: dry mouth, less wet diapers, fewer tears when crying, etc.)
- Experiencing worsening symptoms

WHEN IS RSV SEASON?

RSV is most common between October through March. RSV can spread at the same time as COVID-19 and influenza (flu). To protect yourself and others, it's important to get immunized for all three viruses. Nirsevimab and routine childhood vaccines can be administered during the same visit.



For more information, call our immunization clinics:

Greater Lawn Immunization:
(312) 745-1477

Uptown Clinic:
(312) 742-3227

Pilsen South Ashland Health Hub:
(312) 743-7500

WHAT RSV IMMUNIZATIONS ARE RECOMMENDED?

RSV immunizations are recommended for infants/toddlers, pregnant people, and older adults.

- An RSV immunization called nirsevimab (Beyfortus) can help protect infants from severe RSV illness. Nirsevimab is an antibody and works a little differently than a vaccine. The protective antibodies that help fight RSV in nirsevimab are 90% effective at preventing RSV-related hospitalization with protection lasting about the length of a typical RSV season. RSV immunization with nirsevimab is recommended for:

- All infants from birth to 8 months of age, preferably in the birthing hospital within 1 week of birth. However, infants are eligible up to 8 months of age during RSV season.
- Children 8-19 months of age at high risk for severe RSV.

WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS OF THE RSV IMMUNIZATION?

Side effects are mild and go away quickly. They can include pain, redness, or swelling where the shot was given, and sometimes a rash. Allergic reactions are uncommon but have been reported with nirsevimab and similar antibody products.

ARE RSV IMMUNIZATIONS COVERED BY INSURANCE?

RSV immunization for children should be covered by most private insurance plans. If your child is uninsured, underinsured, Medicaid eligible, or American Indian/Alaskan Native, they are eligible to receive RSV and other recommended immunizations through the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program.