

PROTECTING YOUR CHILD FROM RSV

For Parents, Families, and Caregivers

ABOUT RESPIRATORY SYNCYTIAL VIRUS (RSV)

RSV is a respiratory illness that affects the airways and lungs.

- RSV spreads easily through tiny droplets in the air when someone coughs or sneezes.
- While it often causes mild illness, RSV can lead to severe infections, hospitalization, and can be life-threatening, especially in infants and young children.
- RSV is most common from late fall to early spring.



SYMPTOMS

Cough

Runny nose

Fever

Drinking or eating less

Low energy or unusual tiredness

Irritability

Wheezing

Seek medical attention immediately if your child is having trouble breathing, is dehydrated, and/or their symptoms are getting worse.

PREVENTION

1

Preventive antibody medication given to a child

OR

2

Vaccine given to a pregnant person

Beyfortus™ (also known as nirsevimab)

- Beyfortus is the preventive antibody medication given to a child that offers immediate protection against RSV for up to six months.
- It's the preferred option based on how well it works, how long it provides protection, and how safe it is.
- In Ontario, all babies and eligible young children can receive Beyfortus as a one-time injection before or during RSV season.
- Beyfortus can be administered at the hospital before discharge after birth, or through primary care providers, public health units, nursing stations, or community health centres.

Abrysvo™ (also known as RSVpreF)

- Abrysvo is the vaccine for pregnant individuals given between 32 and 36 weeks if the baby is due near or during RSV season.
- Speak with your healthcare provider for more information about this vaccine.

Additional Ways to Protect Your Family

- Stay home when sick
- Avoid close contact with sick people
- Wash hands often
- Clean and disinfect surfaces regularly
- Cough or sneeze into your arm
- Breastfeed your baby
- Avoid smoking near your child
- Traditional teachings and medicines



Visit the Ontario Ministry of Health's [website](#) for more information.

Speak with a healthcare provider to decide on a plan to protect your child, family, and community during the RSV season.

This fact sheet is available in [French](#), [Cree](#), [Ojibway](#), [Inuktitut](#), and [Mohawk](#).

October 2024

