

What parents need to know about RSV

What is RSV?

RSV (Respiratory syncytial virus) is a common virus that infects the lungs and airways. Most children will get RSV before they turn two.¹ In healthy adults and older children, RSV symptoms are usually mild and cold-like. But for babies, RSV infections can be more serious.

When are babies at highest risk for RSV?

RSV season in Canada is usually from late fall to early spring.² During RSV season, many people get the virus, and it spreads easily from person to person.

Why can RSV be a concern for babies?

RSV is the leading cause of infant hospitalization in Canada.³ Having an RSV infection as an infant can lead to long-term health issues, like a higher risk of asthma, later in childhood.⁴

RSV Protection Options

In Canada, families have options to help protect babies during their first RSV season:



**RSV vaccine
for pregnant people**



**RSV immunizations
for babies**

All available options can lower the risk of severe illness from RSV. The decision depends on factors such as availability, timing (during pregnancy or after birth), and each family's circumstances. Families can make informed decisions by discussing options with a healthcare provider.

RSV Protection Safety

RSV protection options approved in Canada have been carefully reviewed by Health Canada for quality, safety, and effectiveness.

Like all medicines and vaccines, they can cause side effects, and responses may vary from person to person. A healthcare provider can help you understand the potential benefits and risks and whether RSV protection is right for you and your family.^{7,8}



RSV Information Hub

Learn more about RSV and protection options in Canada.

praxushealth.ca/rsv-parents



References:

1. Mayo Clinic - Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

2. Public Health Agency of Canada - Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV): For health professionals

3. Burden of Respiratory Syncytial Virus Hospitalizations in Canada

4. Cleveland Clinic - RSV in Babies & Children

5. CDC - RSV Vaccine Guidance for Pregnant Women

6. CDC - RSV Immunization Guidance for Infants and Young Children

7. Comprehensive Summary of Safety Data on Nirsevimab in Infants and Children from All Pivotal Randomized Clinical Trials

8. NHS - RSV vaccine

Side Effects & Safety

Like all medicines and vaccines, RSV protection options can cause side effects. Not everyone will experience side effects, and when they do happen, they are usually mild and go away on their own within a few days. Serious side effects are rare, but can occur. The following information can help you understand what to expect and when to seek medical care. It does not replace advice from your healthcare provider.

RSV Vaccine for Pregnant People

After receiving the RSV vaccine during pregnancy, **some people may experience common, usually mild side effects:**

- Pain, redness, or swelling where the injection was given
- Feeling tired
- Headache
- Muscle or body aches
- Mild nausea

These symptoms usually go away within a few days.

Rare but serious reactions: As with other vaccines, rare, severe allergic reactions can occur. Seek emergency medical care if you experience:

- Allergic reactions such as swelling of the face, lips, tongue or throat, hives, difficulty breathing or swallowing, dizziness, are signs and symptoms of hypersensitivity reactions.

Pregnancy-specific safety information: Your healthcare provider can discuss the timing that is appropriate for your pregnancy. Always speak with your healthcare provider about what is appropriate for you or your baby. Your pregnancy care provider will look at your full medical and pregnancy history and discuss the potential benefits and risks with you before vaccination.

RSV Immunizations for Babies

Most babies do well after receiving an RSV immunization. **Some may experience common, usually mild side effects:**

- Redness, swelling, firmness or soreness where the injection was given
- Mild fever
- Mild rash
- Fussiness or temporary changes in behaviour

These side effects are usually short-lived and improve on their own.

Rare but serious reactions: Very rarely, babies can have a severe allergic reaction. Seek emergency medical care (call 9-1-1) if your baby has:

- Trouble breathing or wheezing
- Swelling of the face, lips, tongue, or throat
- Widespread rash or hives with other symptoms
- Extreme sleepiness, collapse, or difficulty waking

Your baby's healthcare provider will review your child's medical history and decide if it is suitable. This immunization should not be given to babies who:

- Have had a severe allergic reaction (including anaphylaxis) to an RSV monoclonal antibody received in the past
- Are known to be severely allergic to any or all ingredients in the product

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Contact your healthcare provider if side effects worry you, a fever is high or lasts more than a couple of days, you are unsure what is normal after immunization.