

FACTS ABOUT RESPIRATORY SYNCYTIAL VIRUS (RSV)

WHAT IS RSV?

RSV is a common respiratory virus that often results in mild, cold-like symptoms, but can lead to serious illness. RSV infects the nose, throat, lungs, and breathing passages and is spread through contact with an infected person, or by touching contaminated surfaces and then touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. RSV typically circulates with other seasonal respiratory viruses, and it can be hard to tell the difference between RSV, COVID-19, and flu.

Nearly all children will have an RSV infection before their 2nd birthday but RSV can affect people of all ages. Most people infected are contagious for 3 to 8 days with mild symptoms, which may include:

- **Coughing**
- **Sneezing**
- **Runny nose**
- **Fever**

Certain groups are at greater risk for RSV-related complications, including:

- **Premature infants and infants age 6 months and younger**
- **Individuals with chronic heart or lung disease**
- **Individuals with compromised immune systems**
- **Older adults (65+)**

However, the risk of severe complications exists across the lifespan, even in otherwise healthy individuals.

HELP PREVENT RSV

There are actions you can take now to help prevent RSV:

- **Wash your hands often—for at least 20 seconds using soap and water**
- **Clean frequently touched surfaces**
- **Avoid close contact with others who may be sick and stay home when you are sick**
- **Cover coughs and sneezes**

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?



RSV is the **LEADING CAUSE**

of hospitalization in infants

Each year in the US, RSV is estimated to cause approximately:

58,000
hospitalizations

among children younger than age 5 years



RSV is a major cause of hospitalization and mortality for adults 65+, leading to an estimated:

177,000
hospitalizations

14,000 deaths
annually in the US



In addition to lung infections (pneumonia and bronchiolitis) in young children and infants, severe RSV can lead to:

- **Congestive heart failure**
- **Hospitalization**
- **Death**