



WATERBURY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

RESPIRATORY SYNCYTIAL VIRUS (RSV) AWARENESS:

Keeping ourselves and our kids safe this season!



WHAT IS RSV?

- Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) causes infections of the lungs and respiratory tract.
- RSV is so common that most children have been infected with the virus by age 2 with no harm.
- RSV can also infect adults and older people.
- RSV may cause severe infection in some people, including babies 12 months and younger, premature infants, older adults, people with heart and lung disease, or anyone with a weakened immune system.



SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF RSV

- Signs and symptoms of RSV infection commonly appear about 4-6 days after exposure to the virus.
- RSV usually causes mild cold-like signs and symptoms.
- In severe cases RSV infection can spread to the lower respiratory tract, causing pneumonia or bronchiolitis (inflammation and swelling of small airways).
- Infants are most severely affected by RSV.

MILD CASES



Congested or runny nose, Sneezing



Sore throat



Dry Cough



Low grade fever



Headache

SEVERE CASES



High grade fever



Rapid breathing, or difficulty in breathing



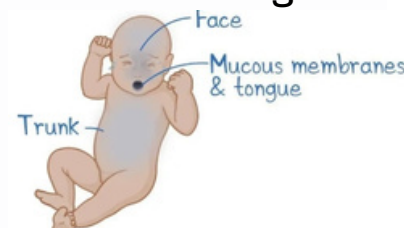
Poor feeding



Irritability



Severe cough and wheezing



Bluish discoloration of skin (called cyanosis)

PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF RSV

How does RSV spread?

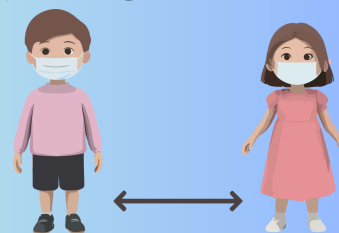
- RSV spreads in the fall and winter.
- It usually peaks in December and January.
- RSV spreads when someone who is sick coughs or sneezes, through close contact with an infected person, or by touching surfaces that have the virus on them.

RSV Testing

- Different types of RSV tests are available.
- Get tested if you think you may have RSV

How to prevent RSV spread?

- Practice good hygiene by covering your coughs and sneezes.
- Wash hands often and clean frequently touched surfaces.
- Purify indoor air by using air purifiers.
- Stay home and away from others when you are sick.
- Use masks, physical distancing, and testing when sick.



Infant and child immunization

Types of immunizations to protect infants from severe RSV:

1. Maternal RSV vaccine given during pregnancy, or
2. RSV antibody given to infants after birth or to high risk young children

Adult Vaccines

- FDA approved RSV vaccines are recommended for all adults ages 75 and older and adults ages 50 – 74 who are at increased risk for severe RSV

When to see a doctor?

Seek immediate medical attention if your child or anyone at risk of severe RSV infection has difficulty breathing, a high fever, or a blue color to the skin (particularly on the lips and in the nail beds).

RESOURCES

1. Mayo Clinic. Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/respiratory-syncytial-virus/symptoms-causes/syc-20353098>
2. CDC. Respiratory Syncytial Virus Infection (RSV). RSV Immunization Guidance for Infants and Young Children. <https://www.cdc.gov/rsv/hcp/vaccine-clinical-guidance/infants-young-children.html>