

Protect your newborn from RSV

What is RSV?

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is a common respiratory virus that usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms — but can also cause severe lower respiratory tract illness in infants. RSV can lead to bronchiolitis, inflammation of the airways, or pneumonia, infection in the lungs.

RSV occurs every year in the United States. In most regions, RSV season starts in the fall and peaks in the winter, but the timing and intensity of the season can vary.

RSV is the leading cause of hospitalization of infants in the US. Each year, an estimated 50,000 – 120,000 children under the age of 5 years are hospitalized with RSV infection. Two to three of every 100 children with RSV will need hospitalization because of difficulty breathing or feeding. They may need oxygen, IV fluids, and mechanical ventilation to help with breathing.

Why does my newborn need protection against RSV before they leave the hospital?

Almost all children get an RSV infection by the time they are 2 years old. They usually get it from older siblings and family members who may not seem to be very ill. Most RSV infections occur in term infants, and the majority of severe cases happen in the first 3 months of life.

Supportive care in the hospital is the only available treatment for RSV lower respiratory tract illness. It is best to protect your newborn from RSV before they are exposed to it at home from other caregivers, siblings or community members.

All infants born during RSV season should receive one dose of an RSV preventive antibody. It is best to give it in the first week of life. Your newborn can receive a dose before going home from the hospital.

Please talk to your newborn's doctor if you have any questions about RSV preventive antibodies.



What is Nirsevimab (Beyfortus)?

Beyfortus is a long-acting RSV preventive antibody (not a vaccine) that provides an important layer of defense to prevent severe RSV infections and protect most infants from getting very sick.

It is given as an intramuscular injection (a shot in the muscle). One dose can protect most infants for up to 5 months — the length of an average RSV season.

Is it safe?

Very few side effects have been reported among infants in clinical trials. Reported side effects were mild and uncommon but included rash and injection site tenderness.

Is it effective?

Beyfortus is effective — real-world studies have shown it is 90% effective at protecting infants from RSV-associated hospitalization during their first RSV season.