Let's Talk About RSV Protection for Infants



What is RSV?

RSV, or respiratory syncytial virus, is a common virus that causes illness. Almost all children will be infected with RSV by 2 years old. RSV is not a new virus and it is very easily spread.

What are the symptoms of RSV?

RSV usually causes a runny nose, fever, sneezing, and cough. In babies, symptoms could include fussiness, breathing problems and less energy.

When does RSV usually spread?

RSV can spread any time, but it is most common during colder months (October to March). This is known as the "respiratory virus season" in Illinois. Respiratory viruses can and do spread all year!

How can I protect my baby from RSV?

There are two immunizations that can help protect an infant against RSV: nirsevimab (Beyfortus™) and clesrovimab (Enflonsia ™).

Are these vaccines?

No, they are immunizations. They work by providing your baby with antibodies that offer protection for approximately six months. This kind of protection is called passive immunity.

What are the side effects of nirsevimab and clesrovimab?

Both nirsevimab and clesrovimab are given through a shot in the muscle, just like other immunizations. Common side effects may include rash and irritation at the injection site (where the shot was given).

When can my baby be immunized for RSV?

Both products are recommended for infants younger than 8 months who:

- Are born during the RSV season or
- Are entering their first RSV season.

Nirsevimab is also available for:

- Children 8-19 months old, who are entering their second RSV season and are at risk of severe RSV disease.

Why do we need to prevent RSV?

RSV is the number one reason babies younger than 1 year old need to be hospitalized. RSV can cause lung infections, such as childhood pneumonia, and death. **These immunizations will help keep babies out of the hospital!**

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Does my baby need to be immunized if the person who gave birth to them was vaccinated while pregnant?

If a person gets Abrysvo during pregnancy, the infant doesn't need nirsevimab or clesrovimab*. If Abrysvo is not given during pregnancy, then your child should receive nirsevimab or clesrovimab after birth.

What is Abrysvo?

Abrysvo is a vaccine that can be given during pregnancy to help protect newborns from RSV. Abrysvo is given between 32-36 weeks' gestation from September 1 through March 1, and can protect infants for up to 6 months after birth.

Which RSV protection should I get for my child?

Talk to your child's doctor about what is best - they can answer any questions you have! There is no preferred product between nirsevimab and clesrovimab.

How much do RSV immunizations cost?

If your child is enrolled or eligible for the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program, it will be free. Most private insurers will also cover them; however, you should call first if you want to know what the cost may be.

What else can I do to protect my family from RSV?

- Wash your hands and teach your children to frequently wash their hands with soap & water for 20 seconds.
- Avoid letting your child touch their face after sharing toys or touching something that may have germs on it (door knobs, etc.) Don't let your child touch someone else's fork or spoon.
- When gathering inside get some ventilation and air circulation going - open a window, turn on a fan.
- Make sure you and your family are up to date with their vaccines.

How can I help my baby if they get sick?

- Let them rest and share extra cuddles if they want them and make sure they stay hydrated.
- Remove mucus with a bulb syringe or snot remover if needed. Using a drop or two of saline can help too.
- Use a cool-mist humidifier.
- Give acetaminophen or ibuprofen if needed (be sure to follow directions regarding ages and amounts, you can use this over the counter medication guide). Antibiotics will not help your child feel better if they have a virus.

Scan for Guide

Know when to get help.

Call your child's doctor if you are concerned or have questions. If your child is severely ill, they may need oxygen, medication to open their airways, or IV fluids.

*There are some situations where nirsevimab or clesrovimab may be recommended (if mother's vaccination status is unknown or the infant was born within 14 days of the mother's vaccination).

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