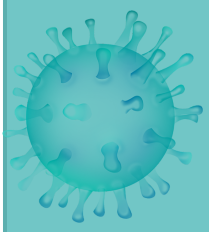
# Preventing RSV Disease in Adults Through Vaccination

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) is a common virus that can infect the nose, throat, lungs and airways.



## What is Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)?

At first, RSV infection causes mild symptoms, like a cold. The disease can become severe pneumonia, making it hard to breathe. In some cases, it can lead to congestive heart failure.

## How Serious Is RSV Disease?

**Each year in the U.S., RSV causes ABOUT 100,000–160,000 HOSPITALIZATIONS in adults age 60 years and older.**

*Because RSV is mistaken for other viruses, it's often missed, so the number is likely even higher.*

## How RSV Spreads:

Respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes

Direct contact with contaminated surfaces
*RSV can live on hard surfaces for several hours*

## Who Is at the Highest Risk?

- Older adults
- People with certain chronic health conditions, like Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) or diabetes, and those who are immunocompromised
- People who are frail or who live in a long-term care setting

## What Is the Treatment for RSV Disease?

There is no specific antiviral medicines to treat RSV disease. Someone sick with RSV will be given supportive care that may include oxygen and respiratory care treatments.

# RSV Vaccination in Adults

## Why Get the RSV Vaccine?

- RSV vaccination helps prevent serious illness, hospital stays, and deaths.
- For older adults, preventing serious illness also prevents the downward spiral people experience during bed rest or hospitalization.
- Getting the vaccine helps prevent the spread of RSV to infants and other loved ones who could become seriously ill.

## Who Should Receive an RSV Vaccine?

To prevent severe RSV disease in adults, **a single, lifetime dose** of an RSV vaccine is recommended for:

- All adults **75 years of age and older**,
- Adults **50 through 74 with a high-risk condition**
- To prevent severe disease in infants, **pediatricians recommend RSV vaccination for previously unvaccinated pregnant women at 32 through 36 weeks gestational age** OR infant immunization with a preventive RSV antibody.

## How Effective Are RSV Vaccines?

Before RSV vaccines were licensed, it was found that they protect most people from having severe RSV disease, which is serious enough to require urgent care, emergency room visits, or hospitalization.

**Vaccination reduces a person's risk of RSV hospitalization by 75%**

*Source: CDC*

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**Learn about how to protect yourself and your family against RSV.**

*This handout was created in collaboration with Sharon Humiston, MD, FAAP.*