

RSV

Respiratory Syncytial Virus in Infants

The most common cause of lower respiratory tract infections in children and the leading cause of hospitalization for infants younger than one year is an illness known as RSV – Respiratory Syncytial Virus.

RSV affects most children within their first two years of life. Infants born prematurely or children with chronic lung disease who are infected with RSV often need to be hospitalized. Healthy babies may not need hospitalization.

RSV is very contagious. Babies are more likely to get it during the winter months. Take precautions to keep your infant, especially a high-risk infant, from catching RSV.

- Always **wash your hands** with warm water and soap before holding your baby. Be sure that relatives and other caregivers wash their hands, too.
- Reduce contact with your baby if you have a cold or fever.
- Try to keep older brothers and sisters away from the baby as much as possible, especially if they have a runny nose, cold or fever.

- Do not take your baby out to crowded places such as shopping centers.
- Do not smoke or let others smoke around your baby.

Infants at high risk for RSV may need medicine to help prevent infection.

Call your baby's doctor right away if you see these symptoms of RSV:

- Runny nose, cough and mild fever
- Lethargy or irritability.
- Does not want to breastfeed or take a bottle.
- Trouble breathing - breathing fast or nostrils flaring.
- Signs of dehydration - no wet diapers.
- Blue-ish color around baby's lips.

This disease can progress quickly.



Brought to you by Parent Help Line at HSHS St. John's Children's Hospital to help keep kids safe, healthy and happy.



Call the Parent Help Line. Help is just a phone call away.
1-217-544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week
www.parenthelpline.org



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