

Preventing RSV in 2026–27



What is RSV?

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is a common virus that infects the lungs and the breathing passages, including the nose, mouth, and throat. Most people infected with RSV will experience mild illness and recover within one to two weeks at home. However, infants, young children, older adults, pregnant people, and people with compromised immune systems are at higher risk for severe RSV disease.

Symptoms of RSV may include a runny nose, a lower appetite, coughing, sneezing, fever, and wheezing. Infants who get RSV usually show symptoms, unlike adults, who can sometimes get RSV and not have any symptoms. In children under 6 months, symptoms of RSV may include irritability, breathing trouble, and decreased eating, drinking, and activity.

How can I protect myself and my loved ones from RSV?

There are two ways to protect against RSV: vaccination and immunization:



RSV vaccines are available for older adults, pregnant people, and people with compromised immune systems. Vaccines require the immune system to learn to create its own defense against the disease.



RSV immunization is recommended for infants if the pregnant parent did not get an RSV vaccine. Monoclonal antibodies from the RSV immunization provide direct and rapid protection, since babies' immune systems are too immature to learn from a vaccine.

The [American Academy of Pediatrics \(AAP\)](#), the [American Academy of Family Physicians \(AAFP\)](#), the [American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists \(ACOG\)](#), and the [Infectious Diseases Society of America \(IDSA\)](#) recommend RSV vaccination or immunization as the best way to protect against severe illness and additional trips to the doctor, emergency room, or hospital.

Where can I get the RSV vaccine? Where can I get my baby an RSV immunization?

The RSV vaccine is typically available at pharmacies, health clinics, and doctors' offices. People can typically book a vaccine appointment in advance, or some clinics and pharmacies allow walk-ins without an appointment.

RSV immunization for infants is typically available in doctors' offices, clinics, and hospitals. Since the RSV immunization provides immediate protection, the best time for infants to get it is in the hospital or birthing center immediately after birth.

Nearly all public and private insurance plans fully cover the RSV vaccine, making it free as part of preventative care. For adults without insurance, free or low-cost RSV vaccine options may be available. Talk to a local pharmacist or a healthcare professional, or check with a local health department about free or low-cost options. The RSV immunization for infants is covered by the Vaccines for Children Program.



2026-27 Recommendations to Protect Against RSV

Adults	The American Academy of Family Physicians recommends that adults ages 75 and older, and adults 50–74 who are at increased risk of severe RSV disease, receive the RSV vaccine at any time of year. There are three single-dose RSV vaccine options available for adults. No additional doses are recommended after the first dose.
Infants	If the pregnant parent does not receive an RSV vaccination, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that babies ages 8 months and under the time is near the RSV season, typically between October and March, receive an RSV immunization. Infants and children ages 8 through 19 months who are at high risk of severe RSV and entering their second RSV season should also get an RSV immunization. Protection from RSV immunization lasts at least 5 months and is 90% effective at preventing infant hospitalizations.
Pregnant People	The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends that pregnant people who are 32 to 36 weeks pregnant between September and March get the RSV vaccine to protect their babies from severe RSV after birth. The prenatal RSV vaccine provides the best protection against severe RSV in babies from birth to 6 months old, when a baby's immune system is not ready to develop immunity on its own. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends a single-dose RSV vaccine for pregnant people in their third trimester. The Pfizer vaccine, Abrysvo, is safe and effective for pregnant people and creates antibodies that pass onto the baby while in the womb and after birth through breast milk. After receiving the RSV shot, it takes about 14 days for the protection to pass from the parent to the baby. The antibodies passed during pregnancy protect the baby for about 6 months after birth. The pregnant parent should talk to their health care professional about RSV vaccination to determine what is best for them and their baby.
Immunocompromised	The Infectious Diseases Society of America recommends that people with compromised immune systems ages 18 and older receive a single dose of the RSV vaccine. People with compromised immune systems who are ages 18 and under should consult with a healthcare professional through <u>shared clinical decision-making</u> .

SOURCES: 2026-27 respiratory virus immunization content is informed by recommendations from the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), and the Infectious Diseases Society of America (IDSA).