

RSV can often mimic a cold or the flu. But as the infection becomes more severe so do the symptoms. And what feels like a minor respiratory infection to us can end up sending a baby to the hospital.



Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) is a highly contagious respiratory virus that can infect people of all ages. This common virus typically causes mild symptoms like those of the common cold. But RSV can be unpredictable and is the leading cause of hospitalization in all infants under 12 months of age. The illness normally lasts three to seven days, and during this time those infected are most contagious. An estimated 58,000 children younger than five are hospitalized with RSV each year.

RSV Symptoms

Symptoms are generally mild and usually clear up on their own after a few days. In some cases, more serious illness may develop and a call to your child's healthcare provider will be warranted. RSV is the most common cause of complications such as bronchiolitis and pneumonia in children younger than 12 months of age in the United States.

RSV Symptoms that Require Urgent Care

- Difficulty breathing
- Not drinking enough
- Decreased activity
- Nasal flaring
- Blueish lips & fingernails



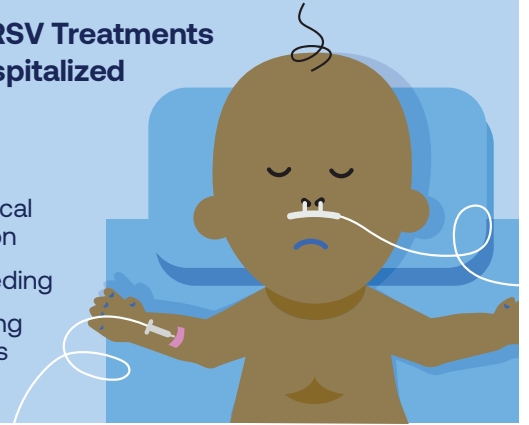
Preventing RSV

Like many respiratory illnesses spread by coughing and sneezing while in close contact with others, transmission may be prevented by maintaining these healthy habits:

- Avoid close contact with infected people
- Avoid sharing cups, bottles or toys that may be contaminated with the virus
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, and then put your used tissue in the garbage
- Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow (not your hands) if you don't have a tissue
- Wash your hands often with soap for at least 20 seconds
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer if a handwashing station is not available

Possible RSV Treatments When Hospitalized

- Oxygen
- IV fluids
- Mechanical ventilation
- Tube feeding
- Suctioning of mucus



Dr. Juanita Mora [shares](#) ways to help prevent RSV and what signs and symptoms to watch for that may indicate a worsening illness.



Learn more by calling our **Lung HelpLine** at **800-LUNGUSA** or visiting Lung.org/rsv

Development of this content is funded by Sanofi. They are not responsible for its content.