



## A Caregiver's Guide to RSV

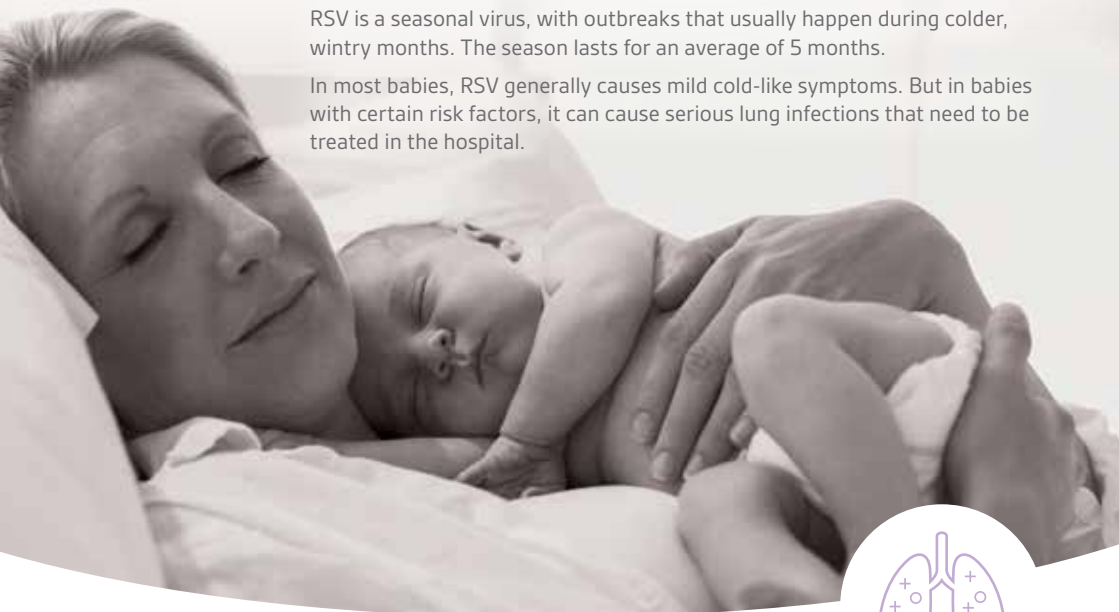
At this fragile stage in your baby's life, knowledge is power. Inside, learn more about protecting your baby from a very common contagious virus called respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

## What is RSV?

RSV stands for respiratory syncytial virus. It's a very common virus that can be passed around easily from person to person.

RSV is a seasonal virus, with outbreaks that usually happen during colder, wintry months. The season lasts for an average of 5 months.

In most babies, RSV generally causes mild cold-like symptoms. But in babies with certain risk factors, it can cause serious lung infections that need to be treated in the hospital.



## What are the symptoms of an RSV infection?

At first, symptoms of an RSV infection may resemble those of a cold and may include:

- Low-grade fever
- Sore throat
- Runny nose
- Mild headache
- Dry cough

For babies at risk, RSV may cause serious lung infections such as pneumonia or bronchiolitis, which causes the tiny airways in the lungs to swell and fill with mucous, making it hard for them to breathe.

Symptoms of these infections may include:

- Fever
- Wheezing
- Shallow or rapid breathing
- Decrease in appetite
- Coughing
- Blue colour to the skin

If your baby is showing more serious symptoms or is at a high risk for serious complications from an RSV infection, talk to the healthcare information 1177 or contact the nearest emergency room.



## Is my baby at risk?

Everyone, both children and adults, can get infected. During the first year of life, more than half of all children become infected and by the age of 2, most children have had one or more RSV virus infections.

What conditions cause a higher risk for serious RSV infections?



### Premature birth

(in babies aged up to 6 months at the start of the RSV season)

When the mother's pregnancy lasted 35 weeks or less.



### Congenital heart disease (CHD)

(in babies or toddlers aged up to 24 months)

Birth defects that affect the normal way the heart works.



### Bronchopulmonary dysplasia (BPD)

(in babies or toddlers aged up to 24 months)

A breathing disorder wherein the baby's lungs do not develop normally.

## How does RSV spread?

RSV is spread easily through sneezing, coughing, or by touching something that might have the virus on it.



### Person-to-person contact

RSV can be spread through direct contact with an infected person, such as kissing or sharing cups/ kitchen utensils.



### Objects or surfaces

RSV can survive up to 6 hours on surfaces such as toys, keyboards, or doorknobs.



### Unwashed hands

RSV can survive 30 minutes or more on unwashed hands.



## How can I protect my child from RSV?

- Wash your hands often and ask others to do the same
- Avoid crowds and other young children, especially those with a cold or fever
- Keep toys, clothes, blankets and sheets clean
- Don't let anyone smoke in your home or near your baby



## Medical prevention against RSV

There is no vaccine for RSV, but there are medicines available that can help babies and young children born with a high risk for serious RSV infections.

There are steps you can take to help protect your baby during the RSV season.

## Glossary of terms

### **Bronchiolitis**

Swelling and mucus buildup in the smallest air passages in the lungs.

### **Bronchopulmonary dysplasia (BPD)**

Chronic lung disease, usually in premature babies, that results from injury and repair in the developing lung.

### **Congenital heart disease**

Heart defect that is present at birth.

### **Contagious**

Infection that is transmissible by direct or indirect contact with an infected person.

### **Pneumonia**

Acute lung infection in which the lung tissue is swollen, resulting in fever, chills, cough, difficulty in breathing, fatigue or chest pain, and in which the swelling is typically caused by a bacterium, a virus or a fungus.

### **Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)**

Virus that can infect the lungs and other airways and is very common in infancy and early childhood.

### **Vaccine**

Preparation of killed or living microorganisms that is given either to produce or artificially increase immunity to a particular disease.

### **Wheezing**

Whistling sound caused by difficulty in breathing.

### **Virus**

Microscopic, non-living infectious agent capable of multiplying in living cells and causing various diseases in humans, animals and plants.



Visit [www.rsvirus.se](http://www.rsvirus.se) to learn more about infants at high risk for RSV hospitalisation and other educational resources about RSV.

Here you can learn more about RSV and get valuable tips for caregivers

**And remember to always talk to your doctor or your child care centre.**

## My notes

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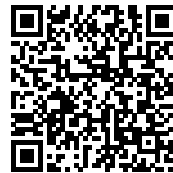
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For more information:  
[www.rsvirus.se/info](http://www.rsvirus.se/info)

Scan the code with the camera on your smartphone or visit [www.rsvirus.se](http://www.rsvirus.se)



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