

IMMUNIZATION INFORMATION STATEMENT

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Preventive Antibody: *What You Need to Know*

Why get immunized with a RSV preventive antibody?

A respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) preventive antibody can prevent severe lung disease caused by RSV.

RSV is a common respiratory virus that usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms but can also affect the lungs. Symptoms of RSV infection may include runny nose, decrease in appetite, coughing, sneezing, fever, or wheezing. Anyone can become infected by RSV, and almost all children get an RSV infection by the time they are 2 years old. While most children recover from an RSV infection in a week or two, RSV infection can be dangerous for infants and some young children, causing difficulty breathing, low oxygen levels, and dehydration. In the United States, RSV is the most common cause of bronchiolitis (inflammation of the small airways in the lungs) and pneumonia (infection of the lungs) in children younger than 1 year of age. Children who get sick from RSV may need to be hospitalized, and some might even die.

RSV Preventive Antibodies

The RSV preventive antibody (generic name nirsevimab, trade name Beyfortus) is a shot that prevents severe RSV disease in infants and young children. Antibodies are proteins that the body's immune system uses to fight off harmful germs. Like traditional vaccines, preventive antibodies are immunizations that provide protection against a specific pathogen. While both are immunizations, the way they provide immunity is different. **Nirsevimab is an immunization that provides antibodies directly to the recipient. Traditional vaccines are immunizations that stimulate the recipient's immune system to produce antibodies.**

Infants born during the RSV season (typically fall through spring) should receive a single dose of the RSV Immunization within 1 week after birth. Most infants whose mothers got the RSV vaccine don't need to get nirsevimab, too. Both protect infants from severe RSV by providing antibodies, either from the mother to the infant or directly to the infant. **Most infants will likely only need protection from either the maternal RSV vaccine or nirsevimab (not both).** However, there may be some situations in which nirsevimab would be recommended for an infant after the mother received an RSV vaccine.

Infants born outside of the RSV season who are younger than 8 months should receive a single dose of the RSV Immunization shortly before their first RSV season (typically the fall), but infants who are younger than 8 months who have not yet received a dose may receive a dose at any time during the season.

Some infants and young children who are at increased risk for severe RSV disease may need a single dose of the RSV antibody before or during their second RSV season.

RSV preventive antibodies can be given at the same time as vaccines routinely recommended for infants and young children.



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