

# The Allergy & Asthma Clinic

[www.TheAllergyClinic.com](http://www.TheAllergyClinic.com)

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Newsletter

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## RSV Vaccine-What You Should Know

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) usually causes mild symptoms, but in some cases, RSV can cause more serious illness in infants, young children, and older adults. RSV is a highly contagious virus and can be spread by touching a contaminated surface, or if an infected person coughs or sneezes and their droplets come in contact with another person's eyes, nose or mouth. While most people are typically contagious for about 3-8 days, some, especially those with COPD, diabetes, heart disease or an auto-immune disorder, can be contagious for up to 4 weeks. These patients also have an increased risk of developing life-threatening complications, including pneumonia. Each year, this leads to 60,000 and 160,000 RSV hospitalizations in adults 65 and older, and 6,000 to 10,000 deaths. Newborns and infants are also susceptible to RSV because their immune systems are not yet fully developed. In children younger than 5, there are approximately 2.1 million RSV-related outpatient visits a year, 58,000 to 80,000 hospitalizations, and 100 to 300 deaths.

## How is RSV Diagnosed?

If you are concerned that you may have picked up RSV, contact your primary care physician, who will usually order a mouth swab or a blood test.

## RSV vaccine is indicated for:

- The prevention of lower respiratory tract disease (LRTD) caused by respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) in people 60 years of age and older using “shared clinical decision-making”, meaning, they may receive a single dose based on discussions with their health care provider about whether RSV vaccination is right for them.
- In late September of this year, the CDC recommended an RSV vaccine for people who are 32-36 weeks pregnant to help protect their babies from severe RSV. The CDC has also recommended RSV immunization to protect babies and toddlers. For older adults, CDC recommends an RSV vaccine.

## RSV Safety Information

- RSV vaccine should not be given to anyone with a history of severe allergic reaction (e.g., anaphylaxis) to any of its components.
- For pregnant individuals: to avoid the potential risk of preterm birth, the RSV vaccine should be given during 32 through 36 weeks gestational age.
- Fainting can happen after getting injectable vaccines, including the RSV vaccine. Precautions should be taken to avoid falling and injury due to fainting.
- Adults with weakened immune systems, including those receiving medicines that suppress the immune system, may have a reduced immune response to the RSV vaccine.
- In adults 60 years of age and older, the most common side effects ( $\geq 10\%$ ) were fatigue, headache, pain at the injection site, and muscle pain.
- In pregnant individuals, the most common side effects ( $\geq 10\%$ ) were pain at the injection site, headache, muscle pain, and nausea.

We at the Allergy and Asthma Clinic strongly encourage you to speak with your primary care physician or obstetrician or pediatrician regarding whether you or your family member should receive the RSV vaccine.