

PROTECTION FROM RESPIRATORY SYNCYTICAL VIRUS (RSV) for ADULTS

What is RSV?

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) infection is a major cause of lower respiratory tract illness, particularly among infants, young children, and older adults at higher risk for RSV. In Canada, RSV causes yearly rises in cases of respiratory disease, usually starting in late fall and running through to early spring. RSV causes runny nose, fever, low appetite, and cough. It can cause severe respiratory disease in older adults, infants, and people with certain chronic medical conditions.

How is RSV spread?

RSV spreads easily when the virus enters the body through droplets released into the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes. You can also be infected if you touch surfaces contaminated by fluids from an infected person's nose or mouth and then touch your nose, eyes, or mouth without washing your hands.

When is RSV vaccine offered?

Ideally, protection against RSV with vaccine should be administered close to the start of respiratory season (September-October) but vaccine can be administered at any time throughout the year.

How many doses of RSV vaccine are needed for optimal protection?

Eligible adults should receive one dose of RSV vaccine. At this time, booster doses are not recommended.

Is RSV vaccine mandatory?

RSV vaccine is not mandatory but is highly recommended for protection against preventable disease. In NL, protection against RSV is offered through the publicly funded system to adults 60 years of age and older living in senior congregate living facilities.

Is the vaccine safe?

All vaccines recommended by the Public Health Agency of Canada and the Provincial Department of Health and Community Services are considered safe and effective for protection against disease.

What are the vaccine's common side effects?

Common side effects in 1% to 10% of individuals that receive vaccine. Common side effects post vaccination are usually mild or moderate and include pain at the injection site, fatigue, headache, and muscle or joint pain. Individuals that experience symptoms post vaccination should consult with their primary care provider to discuss symptom relief.

Who should NOT receive RSV vaccine?

Individuals with anaphylactic allergies to [components of the vaccine](#) or had a reaction to a vaccine prior should talk to their Health Care Provider for advice about immunization with this vaccine.