



# RSV EXPLAINED

Tips + Resources  
for parents and care  
givers of young children

## WHAT IS RSV?

A highly contagious illness that causes infection of the lungs and breathing passages.

Symptoms can include:

- Severe cough
- Wheezing and rapid or difficulty breathing
- Fever



## HOW DOES RSV SPREAD?

RSV is spread through droplets from coughs and sneezes. Droplets can also transfer from:



- Skin-to-skin contact
- Hard surfaces, like doorknobs or toys
- Clothing

## HELP PREVENT RSV

Prevention efforts that parents can take:

- Hand washing or use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Stay home if you or your child are sick, and mask if possible
- Disinfect high-touch surfaces



## POPULATION AT HIGH RISK

Babies 6 months or younger, children with weakened immune systems or chronic lung conditions, can be severely affected by RSV. RSV infections typically occur during outbreaks, often in daycares.

It is recommended that you keep at-risk children away from others as much as possible to reduce their exposure to RSV.



## CARING FOR CHILDREN WITH RSV

Most cases of RSV go away on their own in 1-2 weeks.

If your child has contracted a respiratory virus, at-home treatment can include:

- Nasal suctioning
- Keeping the child hydrated
- Humidifier or shower steam



## WHEN TO GO TO THE DOCTOR

Call your child's doctor if your child starts displaying the following:

- Wheezing or difficulty breathing
- Decreased activity
- Prolonged illness
- Retracting of ribs
- High fever
- Bluish color to the skin

