

RSV VACCINE – ADULTS

Fact Sheet

Protect yourself and those around you by receiving the RSV vaccine.

Getting the RSV vaccine will provide better protection and prevent severe outcomes, especially for those who are most vulnerable to severe diseases.

What is RSV?

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) is a common and highly contagious virus that affects the lungs and airways. RSV can infect people of any age. While it usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms, RSV can lead to serious respiratory illness – especially in older adults – and worsen existing health conditions. In severe cases, RSV can lead to life-threatening pneumonia and trigger new symptoms or worsen the symptoms of chronic conditions.

Those who are at higher risk of severe outcomes from RSV include:

- Older adults who experience a natural decrease in immunity due to aging
- Adults with underlying chronic conditions, including asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), heart disease, diabetes, and advanced liver or kidney diseases
- Adults with weakened immune systems

How can RSV be prevented?

The best way to prevent RSV is through vaccination. One dose of RSV vaccine is available for all individuals ages 75 years and older as well as high risk adults aged 60-74 years of age that meet the following criteria:

- Residents of long-term care homes, elder care lodges, or retirement homes including similar settings, for example co-located facilities
- Patients in hospital receiving alternate level of care (ALC) including similar settings, for example, complex continuing care, hospital transitional programs
- Patients with glomerulonephritis (GN) who are moderately to severely immunocompromised
- Patients receiving hemodialysis or peritoneal dialysis
- Recipients of solid organ or hematopoietic stem cell transplants
- Individuals experiencing homelessness
- Individuals who identify as First Nations, Inuit or Métis

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1-877-464-9675
TTY 1-866-512-6228
york.ca/RSV



If you already received a dose of the RSV vaccine, you do not need another one. Booster doses are not currently recommended.

Other prevention tips:

- Wash your hands well and often with soap and warm water for at least 15 seconds
 - If unavailable, use hand sanitizer with at least 70% alcohol
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and throw the tissue out immediately. Wash your hands afterward. Cough in your upper sleeve if you don't have a tissue
- Avoid large crowds
- Don't touch your face
- Stay home when you're sick
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and shared items

Be sure to eat healthy, stay active and get plenty of sleep to keep your immune system strong.

Can you get the RSV vaccine at the same time as other vaccines?

Yes – you can safely get your RSV vaccine at the same time as other vaccines—or before or after them. This includes COVID-19 vaccine and flu vaccine. Talk to your healthcare provider to see what's right for you.

What are the possible side effects of the RSV vaccine?

Most people will not have any side effects. Some people may experience soreness, redness or swelling at the injection site, headache, tiredness, or muscle aches. These symptoms are usually mild and will go away in a few days. Serious side effects are very rare.

If an allergic reaction is going to occur, it may happen within several minutes to several hours of receiving the vaccine. You should stay at the clinic for 15 minutes after getting the vaccine so the nurse can watch for any immediate signs of a reaction. If you react to the vaccine after leaving the vaccine clinic, please seek medical attention.