

How do you treat RSV?

If you have a mild infection, it gets better by itself.

If your baby is really sick, they may need to go to hospital. **Call the nurse or doctor if:**

- Your child can't sleep because he/she can't breathe properly;
- Your child's breathing is difficult or fast; or
- Your child is less than 1 year and has heart or lung disease.

We don't use antibiotics to treat RSV. They don't help.

How do you prevent RSV?

Wash your hands often. It's the best way to not spread germs.

Breastfeeding protects babies against more severe RSV infection.

Every home with babies and children should be non-smoking.

RSV is hard to prevent. Most people get RSV in fall, winter and spring. A product called Synagis® can help protect some high risk premature infants against RSV. You can ask your doctor or nurse about it.

Where can I get more information?

Call your local health centre, public health unit or medical clinic and talk to your nurse/doctor.

For more information:

Department of Health and Social Services
www.hlthss.gov.nt.ca

Tele-Care NWT
Toll Free - 1-888-255-1010

For more information
please contact your local
health centre.

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Respiratory Syncytial Virus RSV



Was your baby born with a lung disease?

Do you have a premature baby?

You need to know about RSV.

What is RSV?

RSV stands for respiratory syncytial virus. RSV makes people sick - especially babies and young children. It attacks the respiratory system, causing inflammation in the nose, throat and lungs.

RSV frequently causes community wide outbreaks during the winter months.

Who gets RSV?

Almost all children get RSV before they're 2 years old. RSV is the most common cause of respiratory illness for children in the NWT.

Children are most likely to get RSV if:

- They go to daycare;
- They live in a crowded home; or
- They have brothers and sisters who go to school.

Infants who live in a home where people smoke are also more likely to have severe disease.

How do you get RSV?

RSV is very contagious. RSV is easily picked up from anyone who has it:

- If you rub your eyes, nose or mouth after you touch someone who is sick;
- If you share food or drink with someone who is sick; or
- If you breathe the air where a sick person coughs or sneezes.

Infants usually get RSV from older family members.

What are the symptoms?

Older children and adults with RSV may have mild, cold-like symptoms:

- Fever.
- Runny nose.

Infants often have more serious symptoms:

- Coughing.
- Difficult or fast breathing.
- Wheezing.

How do you know if you have RSV?

- 1) You can watch for the symptoms. Find out if other people in your community have RSV.
- 2) A nurse or doctor can listen to your chest - for wheezes and other strange sounds from your lungs.
- 3) A nurse or doctor may also gently rub the inside of your child's nose with a q-tip for a sample to send to the laboratory for testing.

Wash your hands often.
It's the best way to not spread germs.

