



RESPIRATORY HEALTH

Safeguard Your Respiratory System

What is Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)?

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) is a common respiratory virus. It usually causes mild cold-like symptoms, however it can cause serious lung infections, especially in people with severe medical problems.

Respiratory health plays a vital role in our overall well-being, enabling us to breathe freely and enjoy an active and fulfilling life. Our respiratory system, consisting of the lungs, airways, and respiratory muscles, functions to exchange oxygen and remove carbon dioxide from our bodies. However, various factors can affect the health of our respiratory system, leading to respiratory illnesses and complications.

How Does RSV Spread?

RSV spreads from person to person through:

- Coughing
- Sneezing
- Direct physical contact (skin-to-skin)
- Touching an object/surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands

RSV infections usually remain contagious for 3-8 days, but at times infants and others with weakened immune systems can continue to spread the virus for as long as 4 weeks.

Who is at Risk for RSV Infections?

RSV can affect people of all ages, the severity of it depends on the person's age, health history and immune system. The virus is very common in small children. Respiratory infections usually occur in the spring. Although allergies play a big role during the season, ensure your child isn't suffering from any other respiratory problems.

Those most at risk:

- Infants
- Older adults, 65 and older
- People with chronic medical conditions (ex. heart/lung disease)
- People with weakened immune systems

What are the Common Symptoms of RSV?

The symptoms of RSV infection usually start about 4 to 6 days after infection.

Symptoms include:

- Runny nose
- Wheezing
- Fever
- Sneezing
- Coughing
- Decrease in appetite

This virus can cause severe infections in those at high risk, **some include:**

- Bronchitis
- Inflammation of small airways in the lung
- Pneumonia
- Lung infection

How Do I Prevent RSV Infection?



Wash your hands often with **soap** and **water** for an average of 20 seconds



Avoid **touching** your face, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands



Avoid **close contact** such as kissing, shaking hands, and sharing cups and eating utensils with others if you/they are sick



Clean and disinfect surfaces that you frequently touch & cover your mouth when **coughing** and **sneezing**

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