

# Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)

## What is RSV?

RSV is a seasonal virus that can infect the lungs, breathing passages, and often causes common cold-like symptoms. Most children will get RSV by the age of 2, but in high-risk babies RSV can be very serious. Certain high-risk babies require special medication to help prevent RSV.

### Who is considered a high-risk baby?

- Infants who are born prematurely (at 35 weeks or less)
- Babies with lung issues
- Babies with heart issues

Talk to your healthcare provider to find out if your baby is at high risk for RSV disease

### Signs and symptoms of RSV :

RSV usually causes the same symptoms as a bad cold such as :

- Coughing or wheezing
- Stuffy or runny nose
- Mild sore throat
- Earache
- Fast or troubled breathing
- Fever

Babies with RSV may also have no energy, act fussy or are less hungry than usual.

### How to prevent spread of RSV:

- Wash your hands thoroughly before touching your baby
- Ensure your child gets all of his or her vaccines. Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (DTaP), Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib), and pneumococcal vaccines are especially important
- Clean and disinfect surfaces, RSV can live on surfaces for hours
- Do not let anyone smoke in your home or near your baby. Second-hand smoke irritates the mucous membranes in your child's nose, sinuses, and lungs, making him or her more susceptible to infections
- Avoid close contact with sick people

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## SYNAGIS (Palivizumab)

### What is SYNAGIS?

SYNAGIS is prescription medication containing a dose of virus-fighting antibodies that help protect babies from serious lung infections (such as pneumonia) that are caused by RSV virus. Synagis works by preventing growth of the virus. This medication is not used to treat RSV infection, but should be continued even if your child gets the RSV infection to prevent more serious infection.

### How is SYNAGIS administered?

SYNAGIS is an injection, usually in the thigh muscle, that needs to be given each month during RSV season. RSV season in the Yukon starts in November and runs through April.

### What are possible side effects?

Possible side effects of SYNAGIS include: fever, rash, injection site reactions (pain, redness, or swelling) and rare possibility of severe allergic reactions. Seek medical attention right away if your child has any signs or symptoms of a serious allergic reaction.

