

HEALTH TIPS

Make Health Happen

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)

RSV IS AN INFECTION THAT CAN BE VERY SERIOUS FOR SOME ADULTS AND CHILDREN

What Is RSV?

RSV stands for respiratory syncytial virus. It is a common cause of colds, pneumonia and certain lung infections. RSV infections are most common from November to April. People most at risk include:

- Children under the age of 2 with a chronic heart problem or lung condition
- Children who get sick easily
- Babies who are born too early; if your baby is born before 35 weeks, ask your child's doctor about ways to protect your baby from RSV
- Adults with health problems
- Adults over age 65

What are the symptoms of RSV?

The first signs of RSV are often:

- A runny nose
- Fever
- Coughing and sneezing
- Fussy
- Hard time breathing
- Decreased activity or appetite



How is RSV spread?

RSV is spread very easily. You can get it:

- By kissing or holding hands with a person who has it.
- By touching doorknobs, telephones, faucets or other things a person with RSV has touched.
- From the air when someone with RSV has coughed or sneezed.

What can you do?

There is no vaccine for RSV, but talk to your doctor about a series of shots that make lung infections less severe for at-risk children. There are things you can do to help protect all children and adults. Put a check by the steps you will take:

- Wash your hands often, especially before picking up your young child or baby.
- Teach your family to cough and sneeze into their elbow or sleeve instead of their hands.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Do not share bottles, cups and other eating utensils.
- Clean commonly touched surfaces in your home.
- Wash or disinfect toys often.
- Avoid exposure to tobacco smoke.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: *Respiratory Syncytial Virus Infection (RSV)* (March 2013); cdc.gov/rsv. (Accessed June 10, 2014.)



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Helpful phone numbers for UniCare Health Plan of West Virginia, Inc. only

Customer Care Center: 1-800-782-0095 (TTY 1-866-378-1634)

MedCall: 1-888-850-1108 (TTY 1-800-368-4424)

We can translate this for you at no cost.



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To learn more, talk to your doctor or go online to cdc.gov/rsv. You may also call MedCall toll free at 1-888-850-1108 (TTY 1-800-368-4424).

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