

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Vaccine

Vaccines have saved more lives than any other medical intervention. They help the immune system recognize and fight bacteria and viruses that cause serious diseases.

What is Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)?

- RSV is a common virus that affects the lungs. It usually causes mild symptoms like a cold.
- In some people, RSV can cause more serious illnesses, such as:
 - Bronchiolitis (swelling of the small air passages in the lungs).
 - Pneumonia (lung infection).

How is RSV spread?

- RSV spreads each year and is most common in Saskatchewan from late fall through early spring.
- RSV spreads easily in droplets during coughing, sneezing, or close contact with someone who is infected.
- You can get RSV by touching surfaces or objects with the virus on them, and then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands.
- RSV virus can live on surfaces for several hours. It can live on unclean hands for 30 minutes or more. People can spread RSV even before they feel sick.

Who is at higher risk of severe RSV?

Anyone can get RSV, but some people are more likely to become seriously ill and may need hospital care, including:

- Infants younger than six months old
- Adults aged 65 years and older
- People with weakened immune systems (immune compromised) or chronic health conditions.

How can RSV be prevented?

- **Get immunized**, if you are eligible. This helps protect you and others.
- You can get the vaccine anytime of the year, but it is best to get it before the RSV season, which usually starts in late fall and lasts until spring.
- Wash your hands often.
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze.
- Stay home when you are sick and keep children home from school or daycare if they are ill.

Who can get the RSV vaccine for free?

- Residents of long-term care facilities and personal care homes can get 1 RSV vaccine dose if they are 60 years of age and older **and** have never received a previous RSV vaccine.

Who should not get this vaccine?

- People who are currently very sick, with or without fever, should wait until they feel better.
- People who had a serious or life-threatening allergic reaction to a previous RSV vaccine or any of its ingredients.
- People who have already received an RSV vaccine in the past are not eligible for another dose.

What are common reactions to this vaccine?

Vaccines are safe and effective. It is much safer to get vaccinated than to get RSV.

- Common side effects are usually mild lasting 1 to 2 days and may include:
 - Pain, redness or swelling where the needle was given
 - Headache
 - Feeling tired
 - Muscle aches or sore joints
- Less common reactions may include
 - A mild fever.
 - Feeling sick to your stomach (nausea) or loose stools (diarrhea)
 - An increased risk of Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS) has been identified in adults 65 years of age and older who got this vaccine, but no direct link has been identified. However, RSV infection may also increase the risk of GBS in seniors.

Who should you report reactions to?

Report any unexpected or serious reactions to your local public health nurse, doctor, nurse practitioner, or HealthLine 811 as soon as possible.

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What does this vaccine contain?

ABRYSVO™ contains 60 mcg of each stabilized RSV prefusion F antigens (A and B), 22.5 mg mannitol, 0.08mg polysorbate 80, 1.1 mg sodium chloride, 11.3 mg sucrose, 0.11 mg tromethamine, 1.04 mg trometamol hydrochloride, and sterile water for injection. Latex free.

AREXVY contains 120 mcg of RSV Pref3 glycoprotein F antigen, cholesterol, dioleoyl phosphatidylcholine, dipotassium phosphate, disodium phosphate anhydrous, MPL2 (3-O-desacyl-4'-monophosphoryl lipid A), polysorbate 80, potassium dihydrogen phosphate, QS-212 (Quillaja Saponaria Molina, fraction 21), sodium chloride, trehalose dihydrate, and water for injection. Preservative and Latex free.

Provincial immunization fact sheets are available at saskatchewan.ca/immunize.

For more information, contact your local public health office, physician, nurse practitioner, or HealthLine 811.

References: [Canadian Immunization Guide](#), vaccine product monographs.

It is important to stay in the clinic for 15 minutes after getting any vaccine because there is an extremely rare possibility of a life-threatening allergic reaction called anaphylaxis. This may include hives, difficulty breathing, or swelling of the throat, tongue or lips.

This reaction is extremely rare (less than 1 in 1 million people) and can be treated.

If these symptoms happen after you leave the clinic, get medical help right away or call 911.