
RSV Antibody Shots for Children

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is a common infection in children. But the virus can cause severe lung illness. A child may end up in the hospital. Researchers have been working on antibody medicine given by injection (shot). These can help prevent severe lung illness in children.

Why an RSV antibody shot helps

RSV can lead to bronchiolitis or pneumonia. These are serious lung infections. RSV sends thousands of babies to the hospital each year. And it causes hundreds of deaths each year in children under age 5. Approved antibody shots have been shown to help prevent severe lung illness from RSV. They help reduce the number of children in the hospital due to RSV. Antibodies are proteins that attack harmful things like germs. The RSV antibody shot gives a child antibodies that already know how to fight RSV.

What are the RSV antibody shots?

Palivizumab is an antibody shot that has been used for RSV since 1998. It's for babies with some high-risk health conditions. A new antibody shot has been approved by the FDA and CDC. The new antibody shot is called nirsevimab. This antibody shot is for babies 8 months and younger who were born during or are entering their first RSV season. Some older babies between 8 months and 19 months who are at high-risk for RSV may also need a shot.

When is RSV season?

RSV is most common from November to April each year.

Which antibody shot is right for your child?

Talk with your child's healthcare provider to learn more.

Name of
RSV
antibody
shot

Nirsevimab

Palivizumab

Name of
RSV
antibody shot Nirsevimab

Palivizumab

**Who is
it for?**

All babies age 8 months and younger entering their first RSV season. Some older babies between 8 and 19 months in their second RSV season who are at increased risk of severe RSV. Note: If 1 dose of maternal RSV vaccine during weeks 32 through 36 of pregnancy was given immediately before or during RSV season, nirsevimab is not needed for most babies.

High-risk babies who are more at risk to get very sick from RSV. This means babies who have any of these:

- Preterm delivery (at or before 35 weeks)
- Heart problems
- Bronchopulmonary dysplasia
- A weak immune system

**What
does it
do?**

It helps prevent severe lung illness from RSV.

It helps prevent severe lung illness from RSV.

**How is
it
given?**

A needle in the arm or leg

A needle in the arm or leg

**When
and
how
often is
it
given?**

The shot is given 1 time. Timing depends on your baby's age. Ask the healthcare provider when your baby should have the shot.

The shot is given once each month during RSV season. The season is from November to April. This is a total of 6 shots.

**What
are
possible
side
effects?**

- Pain and swelling where the needle went in
- Rash
- Fever
- Severe allergic reaction (rare)

- Pain and swelling where the needle went in
- Fever
- Diarrhea
- Severe allergic reaction (rare)