

# What to Know About RSV Vaccines for Older Adults

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is a common infectious respiratory virus that usually causes cold-like symptoms but can lead to serious illness among infants, some young children, and older adults.<sup>1</sup> For older adults, RSV can be very serious and causes hospitalizations and death each year. In the United States, RSV results in thousands of hospitalizations and deaths annually among adults aged 65 and older.<sup>2</sup>

Vaccines are available to help protect against RSV and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends vaccination for people who are at increased risk for severe RSV.

## I'm over the age of 60. Do I need an RSV vaccine?

- ➔ **For adults 75 years of age and older**, the CDC recommends "routine" vaccination, meaning all individuals in this age group should receive an RSV vaccine.
- ➔ **For adults 60 - 74 years of age**, the CDC recommends a "risk-based" approach to vaccination. This means that vaccination against RSV is recommended for those with certain chronic health conditions and/or those living in nursing home settings, which can increase the risk of severe RSV.

## What steps should I take to get vaccinated?

- ✓ Adults who are eligible can get an RSV vaccine at any time. Ensuring that you are up to date on your RSV vaccine is the best way to help protect yourself from serious RSV infection.<sup>3</sup>
- ✓ If you are aged 60-74 with a risk condition, qualified vaccinators, like pharmacists, nurse practitioners, and other providers, may determine your eligibility for an RSV vaccine based on a clinical assessment, even in the absence of medical documentation of a risk condition.<sup>4</sup> According to the CDC, self-reporting a risk condition is sufficient evidence, and vaccinators should not deny RSV vaccination due to a lack of documentation.

## If you are between 60–74 years of age and have any of the following conditions that may put you at greater risk for severe RSV disease, CDC recommends RSV vaccination.

- ▶ **Chronic cardiovascular disease**
- ▶ **Chronic lung or respiratory disease**
- ▶ **Severe obesity (BMI  $\geq 40$ kg /m<sup>2</sup>)**
- ▶ **Chronic hematologic conditions, including sickle cell disease**
- ▶ **Neurologic or neuromuscular conditions causing impaired airway clearance or respiratory muscle weakness**
- ▶ **Diabetes complicated by chronic kidney disease, neuropathy, retinopathy, or other end-organ damage, or requiring treatment with insulin SGLT2 inhibitors**
- ▶ **End-stage renal disease or dependence on hemodialysis or other renal replacement therapy**
- ▶ **Residence in a nursing home**
- ▶ **Chronic liver disease**
- ▶ **Moderate or severe immunocompromise**
- ▶ **Other chronic medical conditions or risk factors that a health care provider determines would increase the risk for severe disease due to viral respiratory infection**

**If you have any questions about RSV vaccination or whether you have eligible risk conditions, please talk to a healthcare provider.**

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/rsv/about/index.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/72/wr/mm7240a1.htm>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/rsv/hcp/older-adults-faqs.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/73/wr/mm7332e1.htm>