

Your Questions Answered: RSV Vaccination in Pregnant Women

General Questions

What risks are associated with RSV?

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is a common virus that usually causes mild cold-like symptoms. Nearly all babies will be infected with RSV by their second birthday. But RSV can cause severe illness in infants, especially newborns, babies under 6 months, babies born prematurely, and those with certain heart, lung, or immune conditions. RSV is the leading cause of hospitalization in the first year of life, and about two to three out of every 100 infants with RSV need hospital care for oxygen, help with breathing or other care.

Are RSV vaccines covered by health insurance?

Nearly all private and public health insurance plans cover recommended RSV vaccines at no cost. This includes Medicaid, Medicare, and Tricare. Individuals without insurance may be able to access vaccines free of cost through patient assistance programs or state or local health departments.

Where can I get an RSV vaccine?

RSV vaccines are accessible at healthcare providers' offices, pharmacies, federally qualified health centers (FQHCs), and local health departments. To find a vaccination location near you, use [CVEEP's Vaccine Locator Tool](#).

Why does RSV vaccination matter?

As infants are at higher risk for severe RSV illness, RSV vaccination in pregnant women is especially important. RSV vaccines pass antibodies from a pregnant mother to her infant to help teach the young immune system how to fight RSV, which can help prevent severe illness in infants who do get infected.



For Pregnant Women

Why do pregnant women need to get the RSV vaccine?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and leading medical societies recommend maternal RSV vaccination to help prevent severe illness from RSV in infants and young children. The vaccine helps infants develop immunity against the virus through antibodies passed from the mother. Antibodies can provide important protection during the baby's first few months of life – when babies are most vulnerable to severe RSV infection.

When should pregnant women get the RSV vaccine?

Pregnant women should receive an RSV vaccine between 32–36 weeks of pregnancy during RSV season (typically September through January) to protect their infants at birth. If you live in Alaska, Florida, or outside the continental U.S., talk to a healthcare provider about when RSV season is expected where you live. RSV vaccination is not needed for a pregnant woman who received the vaccine during her last pregnancy.

Are vaccines safe for pregnant women?

Maternal vaccination is not new. Vaccines recommended for pregnant women are carefully studied and continue to be monitored for safety. Most people who are pregnant usually experience mild or no side effects from vaccination, which may include soreness at the injection site or fatigue. These side effects are similar to what people who are not pregnant may experience after vaccination.

Research shows that recommended vaccines can help protect mothers, babies, or both, depending on the vaccine. For example, flu and COVID-19 vaccines help protect mothers and can also help protect babies after birth. The RSV vaccine is given during pregnancy to help protect babies from serious RSV illness in their first months of life.

Protecting Across the Lifespan

RSV vaccination can help protect infants during their first months of life. Talk with a healthcare provider about whether maternal RSV vaccination is recommended for you and visit [CVEEP.org](https://cveep.org) to learn more.