Vaccine-Preventable Diseases in Adults: Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)

What is RSV?[1]

- RSV is a common respiratory virus that usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms
- However, for some people, RSV infection can become serious, even requiring hospitalization
- RSV can spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes, by direct contact with someone who has RSV, or by touching a contaminated surface

1. RSV vaccine VIS. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Reviewed February 28, 2025. Accessed June 17, 2026. https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/current-vis/rsv.html

Who is at high risk of serious illness due to RSV?[2]

Adults at risk of severe illness from RSV are those who:

- Are 75 years of age or older
- Have chronic heart or lung disease
- Have weakened immune systems
- Are living in nursing homes or long-term care facilities

RSV can cause exacerbations of existing conditions, including:

- Asthma
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
- Heart failure

2. Clinical overview of RSV. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Reviewed August 18, 2025. Accessed June 17, 2026. https://www.cdc.gov/rsv/hcp/clinical-overview/index.html

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Did You Know

- Eligible adults can get an RSV vaccine at any time, but the best time is late summer or early fall before RSV usually starts to spread in the community.[3]
- A single RSV vaccine dose is recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for all adults ages 75 and older, and for adults ages 50–74 who are at increased risk of severe RSV illness.[3]
- RSV vaccines are effective in preventing lower respiratory tract disease caused by RSV.[3]
- RSV vaccines can be coadministered with other adult vaccines, including the flu vaccine, during the same visit.[3,4] Data about the coadministration of RSV vaccines with other adult vaccines are limited and coadministration may result in increased frequency of common side effects.[3]

3. RSV vaccine guidance for older adults. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Reviewed February 24, 2026. Accessed June 17, 2026. https://www.cdc.gov/rsv/hcp/vaccine-clinical-guidance/adults.html

4. Getting a flu vaccine and other recommended vaccines at the same time. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Reviewed September 17, 2024. Accessed June 17, 2026. https://www.cdc.gov/flu/vaccines/coadministration.html

RSV vaccines can help protect adults aged 50–74 years who are at increased risk and adults aged 75 years and older against RSV. Talk to your doctor to see if getting vaccinated is right for you.

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