



Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Vaccines

What is it?

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) vaccines protect against a serious respiratory virus. RSV is a major cause of upper and lower respiratory illness, particularly among infants, young children, and older adults. For more information, see [Facts about... Respiratory Syncytial Virus \(RSV\)](#).

There are three publicly funded (free) RSV products available in Ontario:

- **Arexvy®** is a vaccine available for eligible adults 60 years of age and older.
- **Abrysvo®** is a vaccine available for eligible adults 60 years of age and older and eligible pregnant individuals.
- **Beyfortus®** is a medication available for eligible infants and high-risk children.

How effective is the vaccine?

- **Arexvy®** has shown 94.1% efficacy against severe RSV related lower respiratory tract disease and 71.7% against RSV related acute respiratory infection.
- **Abrysvo®** administered to pregnant women shows a reduction in RSV associated hospital admission in their infants by 57% and reduced RSV respiratory tract infection by 51%.
- **Beyfortus®** has shown an 80% reduction in RSV respiratory tract infection in healthy infants and helps lower the risk of severe RSV in infants with prematurity, heart disease, or chronic lung disease during their first and second RSV seasons.
- It is recommended to receive one product as a single dose for eligible populations. Studies are ongoing to determine how long the protection lasts with a single dose of vaccine.

What is the schedule for the RSV vaccine?

- The RSV vaccine is given during the fall respiratory season to eligible individuals.
- The RSV vaccine can be co-administered with other seasonal vaccines and is encouraged to help reduce the impact of the respiratory season.

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Who should receive the RSV vaccine?

The following eligible individuals can receive the vaccine for free.

Arexvy and Abrysvo	Beyfortus	Abrysvo
Individuals 60 years of age and older and are: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Residents of long-term care homes, eldercare lodges or retirement homes.• Individuals in hospital receiving alternate level of care (ALC).• Individuals receiving hemodialysis or peritoneal dialysis.• Recipients of solid organ or hematopoietic stem cell transplants.• Individuals experiencing homelessness.• Individuals who identify as First Nations, Inuit, or Métis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Infants born in 2024, prior to the RSV season.• Infants born during the 2024/25 RSV season.• Children up to 24 months of age and are at high risk from RSV disease.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pregnant individuals from 32 to 36 weeks gestational age who will deliver near the start of or during the 2024/25 RSV season.

Individuals aged 60 years and older who are not eligible for the publicly funded RSV vaccine can obtain the vaccine at a pharmacy with a prescription from their primary care provider. Individuals who obtain the RSV vaccine at their local pharmacy will be required to pay out of pocket.

Who should NOT get the vaccine?

Individuals who have a known hypersensitivity or history of severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) to a previous RSV vaccine or to any component of the vaccine should avoid the RSV Vaccine.

Are there side effects with the vaccine?

- Common side effects include redness and pain at the injection site, fatigue, fever, headache, nausea, diarrhea, and muscle or joint pain.
- If you think a serious reaction is developing, seek medical attention right away. Any unusual or significant changes in your health or your child's health after the immunization should be reported to a health care provider and the Health Department at 905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729.

For more information, visit [Respiratory Syncytial Virus \(RSV\) - Region of Durham](#).

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