
Aspiranet

~ November 2022 ~ Monthly Training Topic

What You Need to Know about RSV

You likely have heard about the high numbers of RSV cases in California currently. November through April is typically RSV “season” in the U.S. Please read below to learn more

The following information is from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.org)

What is RSV?

RSV (or respiratory syncytial [sin-SISH-uhl] virus) is a common respiratory virus that causes mild, cold-like symptoms. It is possible for anyone to contract a RSV infection, but it most often impacts infants, young children and older adults, and can be very serious. Infants and young children with weakened immune symptoms, heart or lung problems are particularly at risk. It is the most frequent cause of respiratory infections in infants and children under 2 years of age.

RSV Symptoms:

Symptoms of RSV infection usually include cold-like symptoms:

- Runny and/or stuffy nose
- Decrease in appetite
- Coughing
- Sneezing
- Fever
- Wheezing

These symptoms usually appear in stages and not all at once. In very young infants with RSV, the only symptoms may be irritability, decreased activity, and breathing difficulties.

RSV can also cause more severe infections such as bronchiolitis, an inflammation of the small airways in the lung, and pneumonia, an infection of the lungs. It is the most common cause of bronchiolitis and pneumonia in children younger than 1 year of age. Almost all children will have had an RSV infection by their second birthday. People infected with RSV usually show symptoms within 4 to 6 days after getting infected.

RSV Care:

Most RSV infections go away on their own in a week or two. Fever can be managed with over-the-counter fever reducers, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen, with a healthcare provider’s approval. It is important for people with RSV infection to drink enough fluids to prevent dehydration.

Healthy infants and adults infected with RSV do not usually need to be hospitalized. But some people with RSV infection, especially infants younger than 6 months of age and older adults, may need to be hospitalized if they are having trouble breathing or are dehydrated. In most of these cases, hospitalization only lasts a few days.

RSV Transmission & Prevention:

RSV can spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes. You can get infected if you get droplets from the cough or sneeze in your eyes, nose, or mouth, or if you touch a surface that has the virus on it, like a doorknob, and then touch your face before washing your hands. Additionally, it can spread through direct contact with the virus, like kissing the face of a child with RSV.

People infected with RSV are usually contagious for 3 to 8 days. However, some infants, and people with weakened immune systems, can continue to spread the virus even after they stop showing symptoms, for as long as 4 weeks. Children are often exposed to and infected with RSV outside the home, such as in school or child-care centers. They can then transmit the virus to other members of the family.

RSV can survive for many hours on hard surfaces such as tables and crib rails. It typically lives on soft surfaces such as tissues and hands for shorter amounts of time.

There are steps you can take to help prevent the spread of RSV. Specifically, if you have cold-like symptoms you should

- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your upper shirt sleeve, not your hands
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds
- Avoid close contact, such as kissing, shaking hands, and sharing cups and eating utensils, with others

In addition, cleaning contaminated surfaces (such as doorknobs) may help stop the spread of RSV.

Ideally, people with cold-like symptoms should not interact with children at high risk for severe RSV disease, including premature infants, children younger than 2 years of age with chronic lung or heart conditions, and children with weakened immune systems. If this is not possible, they should carefully follow the prevention steps mentioned above and wash their hands before interacting with such children. They should also refrain from kissing high-risk children while they have cold-like symptoms.

Parents of children at high risk for developing severe RSV disease should help their child with the following:

- Avoid close contact with sick people
- Wash children's hands often with soap and water
- Limit the time children spend in child-care centers or other potentially contagious settings.

When to Contact Medical Professional:

As with any healthcare concern, please do not hesitate to contact the child's health care provider immediately for medical consultation. Call a healthcare professional if an infant or child in your care is having difficulty breathing, not drinking enough fluids, or is experiencing worsening symptoms.

In addition, please notify Aspiranet regarding any concerns or changes in your child's health status.

My signature below indicates that I have completed the November 2022 training “What You Need to Know about RSV”

Signature Resource Parent #1

Date

Print Name Resource Parent #1

Signature Resource Parent #2

Date

Print Name Resource Parent #2

Aspiranet Authorized Signature

Date

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