

**SUBJECT:** RSV Immunization Programs – Fall/Winter 2024/2025  
**Date:** August 1, 2024  
**Pages:** 3  
**To:** Physicians, Hospitals, Pharmacies, Midwives, Long-Term Care Homes, Retirement Homes  
**From:** Dr. Matthew Tenenbaum, Associate Medical Officer of Health

## Older Adults

- **Adults ≥ 60 years can receive RSV vaccine (Abrysvo or Arexvy) if they have an eligible risk factor.**
- **Adults who were immunized last fall/winter do not need to be re-immunized.**

## Infants/Young Children

- **All children born in 2024, and higher-risk children up to 24 months old, can receive Nirsevimab – an RSV immunoglobulin product.**
- **Nirsevimab is administered like a vaccine and can be ordered from WDGPH.**
- **Pregnant women may also receive RSV vaccine to protect their infants, but this is less preferable to the infant receiving Nirsevimab.**

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is a significant cause of morbidity and mortality during the fall/winter respiratory season, particularly for very young children and older adults. For the upcoming 2024/2025 season, there will be publicly funded RSV immunization programs targeting both age groups.

## Older Adult RSV Program

Adults 60 years of age and older are eligible for RSV immunization this fall/winter if they meet one or more of the following risk factors:

- Residing in long-term care homes or elder care lodges
- Residents of all retirement homes (**NEW for 2024/2025**)
- Patients in hospital receiving alternate level of care (ALC)
- Patients 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

These individuals will be able to receive a single dose of RSV vaccine – either Abrysvo or Arexvy – once vaccine is available (expected August/September).

Individuals who received a dose of RSV vaccine last season do not need to be re-immunized. Vaccine efficacy against RSV-associated respiratory disease lasts at least two seasons.<sup>1</sup>

RSV vaccine can be co-administered with other vaccines. Please consider administering RSV alongside other recommended vaccines (flu, COVID-19, pneumococcal, etc.) wherever possible.

Physicians and hospitals will be able to order RSV vaccine from WDG Public Health once it is available (Fall 2024). WDGPH will work directly with long-term care homes and retirement homes to coordinate vaccine distribution.

### **Infant/Child RSV Program**

Children at risk of RSV will be able to receive a publicly funded dose of Nirsevimab (Beyfortus). This includes:

- All children entering their first RSV season (i.e. any child born since January 2024)
- Children up to 24 months of age at high risk due to any of the following:
  - Chronic lung disease of prematurity, including bronchopulmonary dysplasia/chronic lung disease
  - Hemodynamically significant congenital heart disease
  - Severe immunodeficiency
  - Down Syndrome / Trisomy 21
  - Cystic fibrosis with respiratory involvement and/or growth delay
  - Neuromuscular disease
  - Severe congenital airway anomalies impairing clearing of respiratory secretions

Nirsevimab is an immunoglobulin product that protects against RSV-associated disease for at least 5 months.<sup>2</sup> It comes as a 50 mg or 100 mg pre-filled syringe that can be administered intramuscularly like a vaccine. The recommended dose depends on the child's age and weight (see below).

Nirsevimab can be co-administered with vaccines, including routine childhood vaccines. Please consider using well-child visits as an opportunity to offer Nirsevimab wherever possible. For children 6 months and older, please offer Nirsevimab alongside flu and COVID-19 vaccines.

Physicians will be able to order this product from WDG Public Health once it is available. WDGPH will work directly with hospitals to coordinate vaccine distribution for children born during the RSV season.

As an alternative to Nirsevimab, pregnant individuals are eligible to receive a dose of RSVpreF (Abrysvo) RSV vaccine, between 32 to 36 weeks gestational age. Immunization during pregnancy provides passive protection to the infant due to antibody transfer across the placenta.

NACI prefers Nirsevimab over RSVpreF due to current evidence of its superior efficacy and duration of protection.<sup>3</sup> RSVpreF is not required during pregnancy if it is anticipated that the infant will receive Nirsevimab.

Physicians and midwives will be able to order RSV vaccine from WDG Public Health once it is available.

	<b>Nirsevimab</b> (Beyfortus™, Sanofi)	<b>RSVpreF</b> (Abrysvo™, Pfizer)
<b>Product Type</b>	Monoclonal antibody (immunoglobulin)	Stabilized subunit vaccine
<b>How It Works</b>	Provides passive protection by mimicking natural antibodies against RSV.	Stimulates the immune system to produce antibodies against RSV and builds long-term immune memory.
<b>Eligibility</b>	Born in 2024 prior to the RSV season Born during the 2024/25 RSV season Infants up to 24 months of age and are at high risk from RSV disease	Pregnant individuals from 32 to 36 weeks gestational age
<b>Schedule</b>	1 dose	1 dose
<b>Dosing</b>	First Season (incl. those born Jan to April 2024) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&lt; 5kg: 50 mg in 0.5 mL</li> <li>≥ 5 kg: 100 mg in 1.0 mL</li> </ul> Second Season (continued high-risk from RSV) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>200 mg (2 x 1 mL injections)</li> </ul>	0.5 mL (120 mcg) Requires reconstitution
<b>Route</b>	Intramuscular	Intramuscular
<b>Timing (tentative)</b>	October to end of March	September to end of March

## References:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Use of Respiratory Syncytial Virus Vaccines in Older Adults: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices — United States, 2023, July 21, 2023. Available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/72/wr/mm7229a4.htm>
- AstraZeneca Canada Inc. BEYFORTUS™ Product Monograph [Internet]. Toronto: AstraZeneca Canada Inc.; 2023. Available at: [https://pdf.hres.ca/dpd\\_pm/00070439.PDF](https://pdf.hres.ca/dpd_pm/00070439.PDF)
- Public Health Agency of Canada. Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV): Canadian Immunization Guide. [Internet]. Ottawa (ON): Government of Canada; 2024 June. Available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/canadian-immunization-guide-part-4-active-vaccines/respiratory-syncytial-virus.html>

## For more information, please contact:

Name/Title: Dr. Matthew Tenenbaum, Associate Medical Officer of Health  
Email: [matthew.tenenbaum@wdgpublichealth.ca](mailto:matthew.tenenbaum@wdgpublichealth.ca)  
Website: [www.wdgpublichealth.ca](http://www.wdgpublichealth.ca)