



Respiratory Syncytial Virus Vaccine (RSV)

What is the RSV vaccine?

The respiratory syncytial virus vaccine is a safe and effective vaccine to prevent lower respiratory disease from RSV. It is particularly beneficial for those at high risk of infection or complications, such as infant, young children and older adults.

At this time, no vaccines are approved to protect children against RSV; available products for their protection include monoclonal antibodies like palivizumab (Synagis) and nirsevimab (Beyfortus).

What are the benefits of the RSV vaccine?

In Canada, RSV outbreaks typically occur from fall to early spring. While most individuals experience mild symptoms and recover quickly from RSV, some may develop severe infections requiring hospitalization. These include the elderly, immunocompromised individuals, those with chronic illnesses, premature infants, babies under six months old, and young children.

Being vaccinated is the best way to protect you and others around you against RSV infection.

How is the RSV vaccine given?

The RSV vaccine is given as an injection in the upper arm in adults. The vaccine can be co-administered with other vaccines.

Who should receive the RSV vaccine?

Currently in New Brunswick (NB), the vaccine is provided free of charge for these targeted adult groups (one dose only):

- Individuals 75 years of age and older living in the community.
- Individuals 60 years and older living in the long-term care sector (nursing homes and adult residential facilities).
- Individuals 60 years and older hospitalized receiving alternate level of care (ALC), waiting for placement in the long-term care sector (nursing homes and adult residential facilities).
- Individuals 60 years of age and older hospitalized in rehabilitation units within hospitals (or specific rehab centers) due to an acute illness or injury as well as those hospitalized in acute care beds awaiting transfer to these units or centers.

VACCINE FACT SHEET

Who should not receive the RSV vaccine?

The vaccine should not be given if you:

- had a severe allergic reaction to the vaccine in the past; or
- are allergic to any of the ingredients of the vaccine or its container.

What are the possible reactions after receiving the RSV vaccine?

Reactions are generally mild and last one to two days. The most common reactions include soreness, redness and/or swelling where the vaccine was given.

With any vaccine there is an extremely rare possibility (less than one in a million people) of a life-threatening allergic reaction called anaphylaxis. For this reason, it is important to watch for any symptoms for 15 minutes after you receive the vaccine. Signs of this reaction may include rash, difficulty breathing or swelling of the throat, tongue or lips. This reaction can be treated.

In clinical trials and subsequent studies conducted on the vaccine, very rare cases of Guillain-Barré syndrome have been reported. It is unclear whether the vaccine caused these events. The safety of these vaccines will continue to be monitored.

Safety and efficacy:

Evidence supports the use of a single dose of RSV vaccine to help prevent RSV disease in adults 60 years of age and older.

Studies show multi-year protection. As such, one dose is needed. The timing for subsequent doses is unknown at this time. Studies are ongoing to determine how long the vaccines provide protection.

RSV vaccines are authorized by Health Canada and recommended by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI). RSV vaccines have been shown to be safe and demonstrated high effectiveness in preventing severe disease from RSV.

What can be done if you have a reaction to the RSV vaccine?

- A cold compress at the injection site may reduce discomfort.
- For discomfort and fever, you can take medicine by following the manufacturer's instructions. Ask your healthcare provider what medicine is best.

VACCINE FACT SHEET

Where can I get the vaccine?

Eligible residents from long-term care sectors can receive their vaccine on site. Hospitalized patients will be vaccinated by the hospital staff.

Individuals aged 75 years of age and older living in the community can contact their primary care provider or their local pharmacist. Please check the [provincial scheduler](#) for pharmacy appointments.

Further information

Inform your immunization provider if you have any health problems or allergies.

Your immunization provider will give you a record of your immunizations. Keep this record in a safe place and bring it with you when the next immunization is due.

If you have any unusual reactions to the vaccine, or you have any questions or concerns, please contact your primary care provider, pharmacist, local [public health office](#), or Tele-Care (811).

Useful websites

- Government of New Brunswick [Vaccines and immunization](#)
- Public Health Agency of Canada: [Vaccination for adults](#)

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