

## What is RSV?

It stands for “respiratory syncytial virus.”

### RSV can be serious!

Most babies who get RSV just get a cold. But RSV can cause:

- pneumonia, a serious lung disease
- other lung problems
- death (in severe cases).

Each year, up to 125,000 babies must stay in the hospital because of RSV.

### RSV is easy to catch.

RSV can live for a few hours on things like:

- kitchen counters
- toys
- towels, sheets, and blankets
- used tissues.

If you touch these things when RSV is on them, you can get RSV.

**RSV is most common from fall to spring.**



## Why should I learn about RSV?

RSV is very common. But you can help protect your baby!

### Most babies get RSV before they turn 2.

It often strikes those who live in crowded households. It is also common in day-care centers.

### Some babies are at higher risk for severe RSV disease.

RSV can be harmful to babies who were born early or with lung problems.

### Ask your baby's doctor if your baby is at higher risk for severe RSV disease.

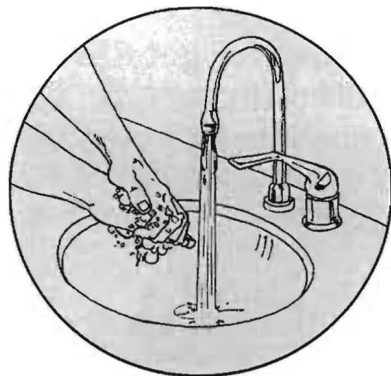
Your baby's doctor may suggest special steps to protect your baby. (See page 5.)



This booklet gives only basic facts about RSV. Be sure to talk with your baby's doctor, nurse, or other health-care provider about all of your baby's health needs.

## You can help protect your baby.

- Wash your hands before touching your baby. Ask others to do the same.
- Keep people who have colds away from your baby. This includes brothers and sisters.
- Stay away from crowds.
- Ask your baby's day-care provider not to expose your baby to crowded conditions.
- Wash your baby's toys and bedding often.
- Do not smoke around your baby. Do not let others smoke, either.



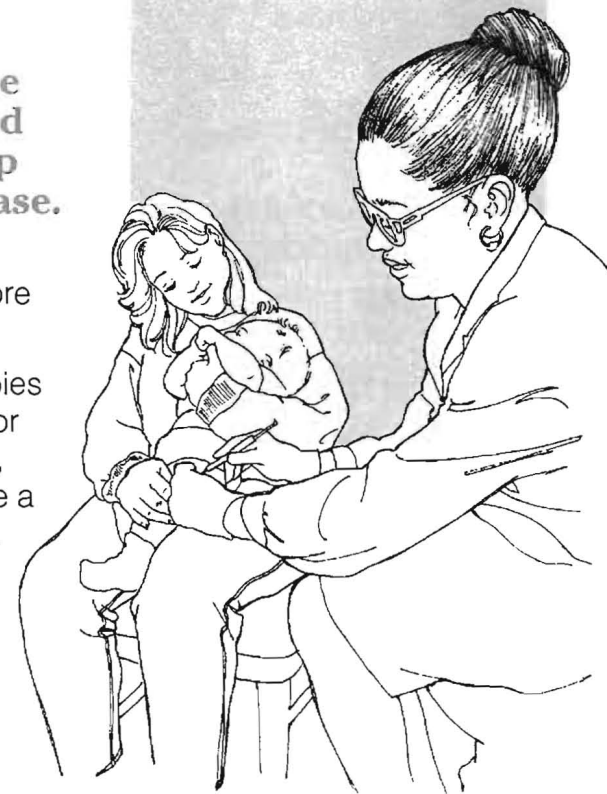
**Chances are your baby will get RSV sometime.**

**Ask your baby's doctor if your baby could be at high risk for RSV disease.**

**Ask your baby's doctor if he or she would recommend other ways to help prevent RSV disease.**

- For healthy babies, RSV is not much more than a cold.
- But for high-risk babies who are premature or have lung problems, RSV infection can be a serious health issue.

**Note that RSV season is typically from fall to spring.**



# Know the signs of RSV disease.

## The signs may seem like a cold.

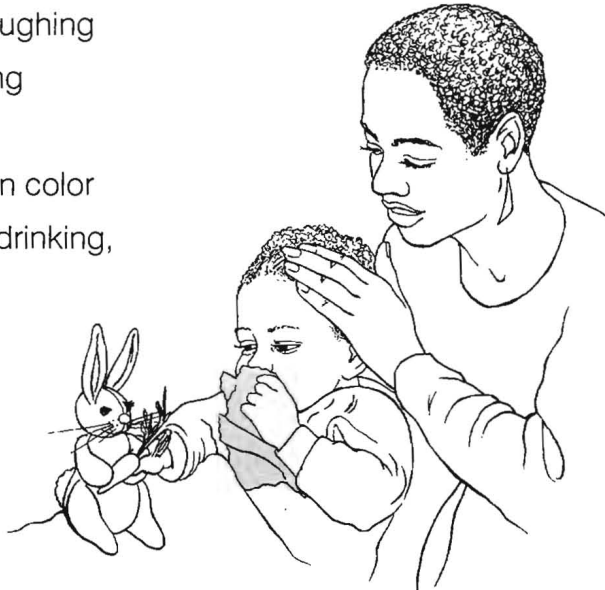
RSV can cause these common problems:

- sneezing
- stuffy or runny nose
- sore throat
- fever.

## RSV disease can get severe very quickly.

Signs of serious problems include:

- wheezing or coughing
- trouble breathing
- fast breathing
- blue or gray skin color
- trouble eating, drinking, or sleeping.



## When to call the doctor

Call right away if your baby:

- has a cold and is less than 6 months old
- has a cold and is at higher risk of severe RSV disease (see page 3)
- shows any breathing problems or severe signs (see list, lower left)
- seems very sick.

If you are unsure whether to call, it is best to call!

Note: If breathing problems show up suddenly, call 9-1-1 or take your baby to the emergency department immediately!

# What the doctor will do

## The doctor will examine your baby.

He or she may also order some tests. For example, your baby may have a chest X-ray. These tests help show if your baby has RSV.



## Treatment can help with symptoms.

There are ways to help your baby feel better. For example, medicine may help lower his or her fever. Make sure to consult with your baby's doctor before giving any medicine.

Most children with RSV can stay at home. But if your baby is very sick, he or she may need to stay in the hospital.



## Follow-up care

### Recovery may take a week or 2.

Your baby will probably begin feeling better in a few days. RSV will go away on its own with time.



### But RSV can come back.

Having had RSV disease does not mean you cannot get it again. If your baby shows signs of severe RSV disease, call your baby's doctor.



## Keep RSV from spreading.

A person can spread RSV for a few weeks after being sick. Use care to keep from making others sick.

### Tips for adults

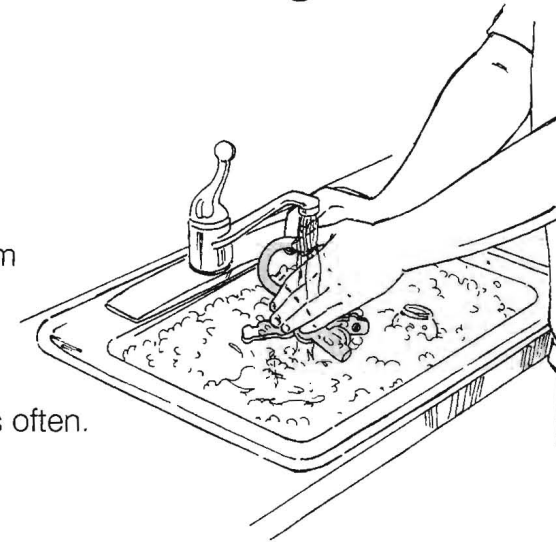
If you have a cold, be careful. It could have been caused by RSV.

- Avoid sneezing or coughing around infants or children.
- Wash hands often. Wash them before touching a baby.



### Tips for babies

- Try to keep a sick baby away from others—especially babies.
- Keep a baby home from child care if he or she is not feeling well.
- Wash the baby's toys, clothes, and play areas often.



**Use special care around high-risk babies.**

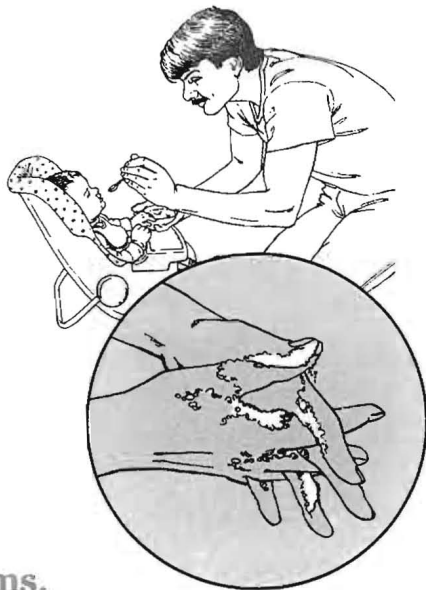
## Take steps to control RSV.

The time to stop RSV is before it starts.

### Hand washing is the most important step.

This helps stop RSV—and many other illnesses. Children and adults should wash hands:

- after sneezing or coughing
- after using the bathroom or changing diapers
- before handling or eating food
- after touching pets.

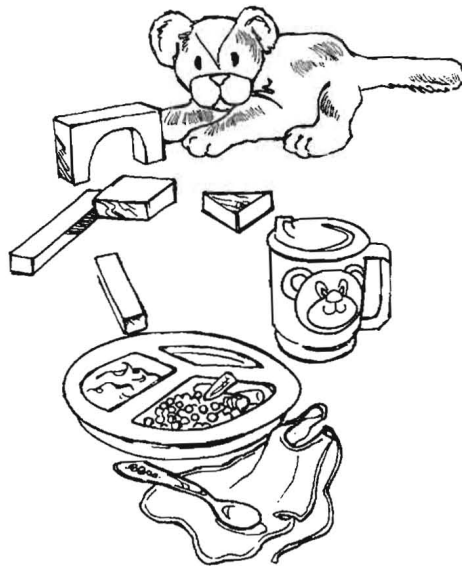


### Do not share personal items.

Do not share:

- pacifiers
- cups, forks, and spoons
- toothbrushes
- bathroom water glasses
- towels and washcloths.

Clean toys and play areas often.



## Learn about RSV disease and its risks.

### Ask your baby's doctor

if your baby is at high risk for RSV disease.

### Find out if your baby's doctor recommends other ways

to help prevent RSV.

**Know the signs of RSV,** and when to call the doctor.

**Learn how to stop RSV** from spreading.

**Help keep your baby healthy!**

