

# All About Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)

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## RSV?

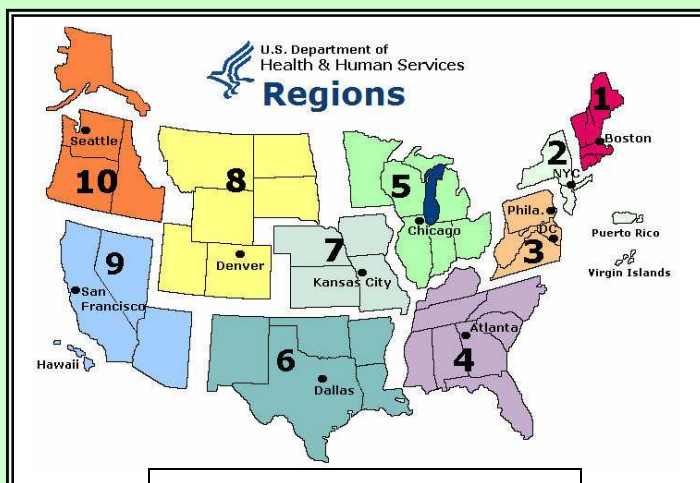
Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is the most common cause of severe lower respiratory tract disease among infants and young children worldwide. It is a contagious viral disease that infects the lungs and breathing passages. Almost everyone gets RSV by age 2. People can get the disease more than once. Ill effects typically only last a week or two, but RSV can be severe, especially in children 6 months of age and younger and in older adults. Premature infants or those with lung or heart problems are at high risk for serious disease. Cases of RSV typically coincide with flu season. The number of cases starts to rise in the fall, peaks in the winter, and then goes back down in the early spring. However, RSV season differs by location.

## Symptoms

Typical symptoms of RSV in infants and young children include fever, reduced appetite, runny nose, cough, and wheezing. In older children and adults symptoms include runny nose, sore throat, cough, and feeling of general sickness. RSV can lead to more serious illnesses such as pneumonia and bronchiolitis.



[http://cdc.gov/Features/dsRSV/dsRSV\\_270px.jpg](http://cdc.gov/Features/dsRSV/dsRSV_270px.jpg)



<http://www.hhs.gov/about/regionmap.htm>

## How it spreads?

Transmission of RSV is primarily spread via respiratory droplets out of the mouth or nose. These are typically emitted when an infected individual coughs or sneezes. Respiratory droplets can directly transfer to another individual or they may land on inanimate objects, such as doorknobs and countertops, and still have the ability to infect. This generally occurs when an infected object is touched and then fingers are put in the mouth or an eye is rubbed.

## Prevention Methods

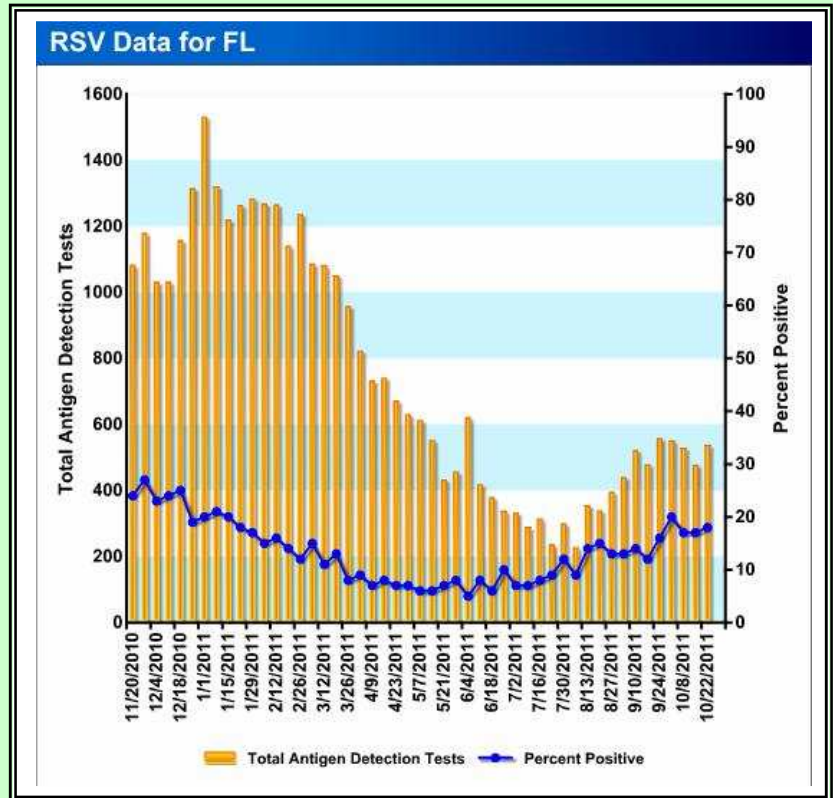
- Cover mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water for 15-20 seconds
- Avoid sharing cups and eating utensils
- Refrain from kissing others

There is no vaccine available to protect against RSV. However, anyone at high risk for contracting the illness can get monthly shots of a drug called palivizumab which can help prevent serious illness during RSV season.

For more information on RSV, please visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/rsv/>

## Fast Fact

According to CDC, almost all children will be infected with RSV by their second birthday.



<http://www.cdc.gov/surveillance/nrevss/rsv/state.html>