

# RSV and Older Adults

## What is RSV?

- Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is a common infection that affects the nose, throat, and lungs.
- While usually associated with severe infections in infants and toddlers, RSV can also be dangerous for older adults, individuals living in nursing homes, or those with chronic health conditions, such as heart or lung disease.
- RSV can cause pneumonia, worsen asthma, COPD, or heart failure, and can lead to long hospital stays.



## What are the symptoms and how is it spread?



- RSV is spread person-to-person through coughs and sneezes.
- Symptoms can be mild at first and include sneezing, coughing, fever, and headache.
- You can spread RSV to others one to two days before you notice symptoms.

## How can we protect ourselves and others?

- Wash your hands, cover coughs and sneezes, and stay home when you are sick.
- Get vaccinated. One dose of the RSV vaccine is recommended for:
  - Everyone aged 75 years and older.
  - Adults age 50-74 who have risk factors or chronic conditions that could make RSV more severe.
- To find the vaccine:
  - Check with your health care provider, local pharmacy, local health department (LHD), or federally qualified health center (FQHC).
  - Call ahead to see if appointments for the vaccine are available.



LHD Locator

FQHC Locator

Learn more: [nj.gov/health/respiratory-viruses/rsv](https://nj.gov/health/respiratory-viruses/rsv)