

RSV Vaccines

WHAT IS RSV?

RSV is a virus that causes a respiratory infection with symptoms presenting as fever, cough and shortness of breath. For most people this virus causes mild symptoms that can be managed conservatively.

However, for vulnerable populations such as premature and infants under 1 years old, immunocompromised and people over 60; they can develop more serious infections that can lead to hospitalization and even death. Unfortunately; over the last few years we have seen a rise in more of these people being hospitalized from this infection.

RSV VACCINE INFO:

The RSV vaccine that has come out this year is still in its early stages and is only indicated for people 60 years of age and older at this time. Some of the preliminary studies have shown that a person receiving the vaccine has a reduction in infection rate by 86%. It is a non-live vaccine that contains RSV proteins to trigger an immune response (the same way a flu vaccine works).

The common side effects of the vaccine include pain at the injection site, fatigue, headache, muscle aches and joint aches.

At this time, they are recommending people wait 2 weeks between getting the RSV vaccine and any other vaccine so proper reactions can be documented to the RSV vaccine.

If you have severe allergies to any of the vaccine ingredients, they are recommending you not get the vaccine.

HOW TO GET THE VACCINE:

Currently, the Ontario government is providing the vaccine for free for those people living in long term care homes, Elder Care Lodges and some retirement homes licensed to provide dementia care services.

For those people greater than 60 years old who are still living in the community you must purchase your vaccine, the cost of which is between \$250 to \$300. You require a prescription which you can get by booking an appointment with your physician.

<https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/Modules/News/index.aspx?newsId=e046570c-8d80-41eb-bd37-747c93fa26eb>

<https://files.ontario.ca/moh-respiratory-syncytial-virus-fact-sheet-for-vaccine-recipients-v1.0-en-2023-10-25.pdf>