

## **RSV – Some Useful Information**

Here is some useful information to help you prevent RSV this season.

**RSV or Respiratory Syncytial Virus** is a common virus that causes respiratory illness in people of all ages, but especially in small children. There are usually a lot of people, especially small children, with RSV in the fall and winter months.

### **Symptoms**

#### **What symptoms should we look out for?**

Common symptoms include:

- Runny Nose
- Loss of appetite
- Coughing
- Sneezing
- Fever
- Wheezing

Symptoms might look differently in young infants, which might also be irritable, less active than usual, and show difficulty breathing.

### **Transmission**

#### **How does a person get RSV?**

- When a person who is currently infected with RSV coughs or sneezes droplets with the virus can spread.
  - The droplets get in a person's eyes, nose, or mouth and cause the illness.
  - The droplets can get on a surface (like a doorknob), and get picked up onto another person's hand. When that person touches their eyes, nose or mouth, they can get the virus in their body and it can make them sick.
- Touching the virus directly, like kissing the face of a person with RSV (sneeze or cough droplets might also be on their face.)

#### **How long can a person spread the virus?**

- A person can usually spread the virus for 3 to 8 days after they start to have symptoms.
- A person might also be contagious for 1-2 days before they start to have symptoms.

## **Prevention**

### **How do we prevent RSV at my facility or in my home?**

- Cover any coughs or sneezes with a tissue or your elbow, and then wash your hands after.
- Wash your hands more often – wash for 20 seconds, with soap and water.
  - An alcohol based hand sanitizer is good if you don't have soap and water handy.
  - Antibacterial soap is also helpful if available.
- Clean surfaces more often, especially surfaces which are touched a lot like doorknobs, light switches, counters and fridge handles, phones etc.
  - Read on the label of your facility or household cleaner to see if it is effective against RSV, and make sure to follow label instructions.
    - Some products have a chart with how long the surface has to stay wet for it to work properly, read and follow this carefully.
- Avoid activities where there is close contact such as holding or shaking hands, or kissing.
- Avoid sharing eating utensils and cups with others.
- Stay home if you are sick, keep sick children at home.

## **Exclusion**

- There is no specific recommendation for exclusion of a person with RSV from school or daycare.
  - For most facilities, standard fever criteria will apply – each facility can determine based on their regulatory partners guidelines how long to exclude sick children or employees.

More information about RSV can be found on [www.cdc.gov/rsv](http://www.cdc.gov/rsv).

If a person is having symptoms, they should contact their primary care doctor for advice