

## News Release

### **For Immediate Release**

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### **When to Get Immunized for RSV**

Cold and flu season will be arriving soon, including Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) which is most common during the fall and winter months. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) encourages residents to get their RSV vaccinations early in October before the RSV season begins. RSV season usually starts in October and lasts through March.

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) is a virus spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes and leaves germs on surfaces. Other people get it from touching a surface contaminated with RSV, or by direct contact with someone who has RSV. Someone who is sick with RSV can spread the virus for up to a week, including spreading the illness 2 days before symptoms start.

Anyone can get RSV; however, most people get infected with RSV during their first year of life. Mild infection and a quick recovery are common, but infants, young children, and older adults are at risk of severe RSV and complications. Each year there are an estimated 58,000 to 80,000 children under the age of 5 that are hospitalized due to RSV.

#### **Who can get RSV vaccine:**

- Adults 75 years of age or older.
- Adults 50 to 74 years old who have chronic heart or lung disease, weakened immune systems, live in a nursing home, or certain other medical conditions such as diabetes.
- Pregnant women can get a dose of the RSV vaccine at 32-36 weeks gestation to help protect themselves and pass on immunity to the baby.
- Infants up to 8 months whose mothers did not receive an RSV vaccine during pregnancy. These infants can also get the RSV antibody which provides immediate protection.
- Children aged 8 months to 19 months who have underlying medical conditions, such as chronic lung disease from being born early.

For more information or if you want to know if you are eligible for the RSV vaccine, talk to your medical provider or local pharmacist, or call the public health nurse at SWNPHD at 308-345-4223. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties. Follow SWNPHD on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, or view the website at [swhealth.ne.gov](http://swhealth.ne.gov) which contains many resources and additional information helpful to prevent disease, promote and protect health.

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