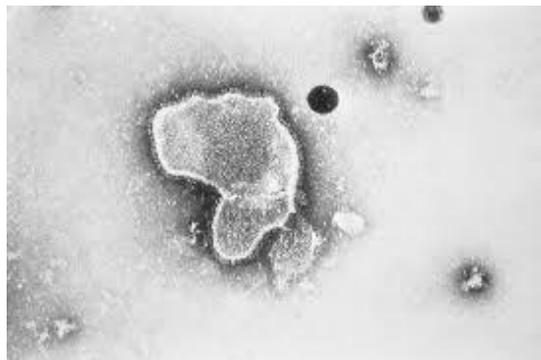


Infection Prevention and Control

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) (Common cold virus)



Information Leaflet for Parents

What is RSV?

RSV is one of the common viruses that cause coughs and colds in the winter period. Over 60% of children have been infected by their first birthday, and over 80% by two years of age. The antibodies that develop following early childhood infection do not prevent further RSV infections throughout life. The full extent to which adults are affected by RSV remains unknown

How will I know my child has RSV?

RSV infection causes symptoms similar to a cold, including rhinitis (runny nose, sneezing or nasal congestion), cough, and sometimes fever. Ear infections and croup (a barking cough caused by inflammation of the upper airways) can also occur.

Whilst most RSV infections usually cause only mild illness, infants aged less than 6 months frequently develop the most severe disease (bronchiolitis and chest infection), which may result in being admitted to hospital. Bronchiolitis occurs when the tiny airways leading to the lungs, called bronchioles, become inflamed and fill with mucus, making it difficult for a child to breathe. Elderly people with chronic lung disease are also at increased risk of developing severe disease.

How did my child get RSV?

They may have caught RSV if they touched an infected person and then touched their own eyes, nose or mouth. The virus can also survive on surfaces or objects for up to 7 hours. Infection can be prevented through hand washing.

What will happen to my child?

They may be moved into a single room to prevent the chance of spreading this infection to other children. Where several children are affected, they may be nursed together in one area of the ward.

Staff may wear gloves and aprons when caring for your child. A sample for laboratory testing may be taken from their nose and throat.

How is RSV treated?

No specific treatment is suitable for general use, and so treatment is therefore aimed at supporting your child and reducing the symptoms.

Can it affect visitors?

The very young (less than 1 year of age) and the elderly are at the greatest risk of infection.

How can I stop RSV from spreading?

- Hand hygiene using soap and water is very important. This should be done after coughing, sneezing or blowing their nose, as hygienic hand rub is not as effective against this virus.
- Encourage visitors and staff coming into your child's room to clean their hands too.

Will my child be able to go home with RSV?

As soon as the doctor says your child is well enough, they can go home. Having an RSV infection should not stop this.

Should you have any further questions or require further advice please speak to your doctor, nurse or Infection Prevention staff.

Infection Prevention Team 01535 294848

Write any questions/queries below

The Public Health England website and will give further guidance and information: <https://www.gov.uk/health-protection/infectious-diseases>

If you require this leaflet in other languages or formats please telephone the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on: 01535 294019 for advice.

Please raise any issue you may have about your care and treatment with a member of staff. Raising your concerns will not adversely affect the care you will receive.