

Respiratory syncytial virus

For adults

The Respiratory Syncytial Virus vaccine is part of the routine Yukon Immunization Schedule for older adults.

What is the RSV vaccine?

The RSV vaccine is an inactivated vaccine that protects against Respiratory Syncytial Virus. This vaccine works by stimulating the body's immune system to produce antibodies against this disease.

Who should get the RSV vaccine?

The RSV vaccine is recommended for:

- adults aged 65 years and older; and
- adults aged 18 to 64 years at high risk of severe RSV illness, including those who:
 - live in long-term care homes;
 - have received a lung transplant or haematopoietic stem cell transplant (HSCT);
 - need long-term oxygen therapy;
 - are receiving dialysis treatment; and
 - with a history of bronchopulmonary dysplasia.

What is RSV?

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) is a virus that spreads easily from person to person. It infects your lungs and breathing passages.

In the Yukon, outbreaks usually happen during the fall and winter.

While many people only get mild symptoms, RSV can cause serious illness in:

- infants;
- older adults; and
- people with long-term health conditions.

A severe case of RSV can lead to lung infections like bronchiolitis or pneumonia. It can also cause wheezing for up to 5 years after you get sick, lead to a hospital stay or even be fatal.

Why is the RSV vaccine recommended?

Getting vaccinated is safe, and it is one of the best ways to prevent RSV.

Most people who catch RSV only get a mild illness. However, seniors and individuals with chronic health conditions are at a much higher risk of getting very sick.

When you get the vaccine, you do not just protect yourself; you also help keep your family, neighbours and community safe.

What are the possible reactions to RSV vaccines?

Common reactions to the RSV vaccine may include:

- redness, swelling or soreness where the vaccine was given;
- headache;
- tiredness;
- mild fever; and
- nausea or other mild digestive symptoms.

These reactions are usually mild and go away within one to two days.

To help relieve discomfort, you can apply a cool, damp cloth to the injection site. If needed, you may take a pain or fever medication such as Acetaminophen.

Contact your health care provider if symptoms are severe or last longer than 48 hours.

After receiving the vaccine, stay at the clinic for 15 minutes. In rare cases, a person may have a serious allergic reaction. Clinic staff are trained to respond to these reactions.

If you develop signs of a serious reaction after leaving, call 911 or your local emergency number.

For more information, visit:

yukonimmunization.ca