



**Aboriginal
Health Council
of Western Australia**

RSV Immunisation with Beyfortus[®] in Babies and Young Children

What parents and carers need to know

What is RSV?

RSV (short for Respiratory Syncytial Virus) is a common cold sick virus that mostly affects babies and young kids, but can infect people of any age.

Most babies catch RSV in their first year of life and it is the **most common reason for kids under five years to need to stay in hospital**.

Aboriginal babies are at higher risk of becoming very sick with RSV, with **one in 20 babies needing to stay in hospital in their first 6 months of life**.

Babies who get RSV can be more at risk of getting **asthma, wheezing, and allergies** as they grow up. RSV infections usually occur in the colder months, similar to the flu. In the northern parts of WA, it can occur all year.

What is the Beyfortus[®] immunisation?

An immunisation (needle) called **Beyfortus[®]** is available to protect babies from RSV. The needle gives babies antibodies to fight off RSV, and protects them for at least 5 months (about the length of the RSV season).



Who can get Beyfortus® for free in WA?

The best time for a baby to have Beyfortus® is shortly before the start of the RSV season. In most parts of WA, the RSV season is from April to September, when Beyfortus® will be available for eligible babies and children.

In the Kimberley and Pilbara, RSV season lasts all year round so Beyfortus® is available all year. Talk to your clinic for more information.

ELIGIBILITY

From 1 April 2025 to 30 September 2025, Beyfortus will be offered for **free to all babies born between 1 October 2024 and 30 September 2025 whose mothers did not receive Abrysvo during pregnancy.**

Other children that can get Beyfortus are:

- **Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children born between 1 October 2023 and 30 September 2024 (to provide protection for them in their second RSV season)**
- Babies with specific high-risk medical conditions (MRC) born on or after 1 October 2023 (even if their mother received Abrysvo during pregnancy)
- Babies whose mothers are immunocompromised (even if their mother received Abrysvo during pregnancy)
- Babies who are born less than two weeks after their mother received Abrysvo in pregnancy

Is Beyfortus® safe?

Yes, Beyfortus® is safe and effective. Severe side effects are uncommon. Most reactions are minor and resolve quickly. The most common side effects include pain, redness and swelling and the injection site, and rash.

Can Beyfortus® be given at the same time as other vaccines?

Yes, Beyfortus® can safely be administered at the same time as other routine childhood vaccines including Hepatitis B vaccine given at birth, and vaccines given at two, four, six, and 12 months.

How long does the protection from Beyfortus® last?

Beyfortus® gives protection for at least 5 months, the same time as a typical RSV season.

What more can I do to keep my baby safe from RSV?

- Keep small babies away from people who are sick.
- Family and friends should cover their coughs and sneezes and wash their hands regularly.

If you would like to know more, ask your health worker or visit the HealthyWA website:
https://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/articles/n_r/respiratory-syncytial-virus



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