

Nirsevimab: An RSV Antibody for Infants



New medicines are available to help protect infants and young children from severe illness caused by respiratory syncytial (sin-SUSH-uhl) virus, or RSV. Nirsevimab (nir-se-vi-mab)—also known as Beyfortus—is a medicine that helps protect infants and young children from getting very sick from RSV.

What is respiratory syncytial virus or RSV?

RSV is a common respiratory virus. Most people usually get mild, cold-like symptoms and feel better in one to two weeks. RSV can cause more severe illness in some people, including premature infants and babies younger than 12 months.

How does RSV affect my child?

Symptoms of RSV infection commonly include the following:

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

What is severe RSV?

Severe RSV is an illness in infants that can lead to more serious lung infections like pneumonia. Infants with severe RSV usually have trouble breathing or become dehydrated. However, treatment can help prevent these complications.

Contact your healthcare provider and seek care if your child is experiencing worsening RSV symptoms or is having difficulty breathing.

What is nirsevimab?

Nirsevimab is a no-cost medicine for infants who are 19 months or younger. This medicine helps infants build antibodies or proteins that protect against severe RSV.

How is nirsevimab given?

Nirsevimab is given as a single dose into the thigh muscle. Only one dose is recommended. Children who should get nirsevimab can get it at any time.

Who is nirsevimab for?

Nirsevimab is available across the United States (U.S.). It is given to newborns and infants 0–19 months who meet at least one of the following:

- American Indian and Alaska Native
- Premature birth
- Chronic lung or congenital heart disease
- Severe immunocompromise
- Severe cystic fibrosis
- Neuromuscular disorders or congenital anomalies, including those who have difficulty swallowing or clearing mucus

This medicine is provided at no cost by a federally funded program called Vaccine for Children.

What are the benefits of nirsevimab?

Nirsevimab may decrease the risk of severe RSV and is most effective right after the dose is given. One dose protects infants for at least 5 months.

Is nirsevimab safe for my infant?

Yes, nirsevimab has been tested for safety and effectiveness in infants.

Are there risks to taking nirsevimab?

The common side effects from nirsevimab include pain, redness, and/or swelling at injection site.

If your child has a history of severe reactions to the active ingredients in nirsevimab or a history of bleeding disorders, you should talk with your child's healthcare provider.

How else can I protect myself and my loved ones from RSV?

- Wash your hands often
- Avoid close contact with sick people
- Frequently clean surfaces
- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Stay home when sick

References

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