



Winter 2023



# TAKE CARE

**HEALTHY TIPS  
FOR  
WINTER**

As we enter the holiday season, as well as cold and flu season, we have put together some resources to help keep your family healthy and safe when at home or when visiting family and friends. The standbys of washing your hands often, covering a cough, and staying home if you are unwell are still some of the most important things you can do to curb the spread of viruses. Also, don't forget Flu vaccines, which help prevent serious illness, are still readily available at your pediatrician's office or at your local pharmacy. Take Care!



The Children's Health Foundation is a non-profit organization that partners with your Pediatrician to develop quality health care programs in our community. We work together to foster the highest quality care for children, to raise awareness on health issues, and to achieve better children's health outcomes. Please ask your provider for more information.

## CHILDREN'S HEALTH *foundation*

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**[www.ch-foundation.org](http://www.ch-foundation.org)**

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## RSV: When It's More Than Just a Cold

by Andrea Jones, MD, FAAP

Almost all children get RSV at least once before they are 2 years old. For most healthy children, RSV is like a cold. But, some children get very sick with RSV.

### What is RSV?

RSV (or respiratory syncytial virus) is one of the many viruses that cause respiratory illnesses, illnesses of the nose, throat and lungs. This virus usually occurs in the late fall through early spring months, but can vary in different parts of the country.

With mask-wearing and physical distancing for COVID-19, there were fewer cases of RSV in 2020. However, once safety measures relaxed with the arrival of COVID-19 vaccines, a rise in RSV cases began in spring 2021. The spread of RSV and other seasonal respiratory illnesses like influenza (flu) has also started earlier than usual this year.

### RSV symptoms in babies

Typically, RSV causes a cold, which may be followed by bronchiolitis or pneumonia. Symptoms generally last an average of 5-7 days.

### Is your baby or young child at a greater risk of this respiratory illness?

Infants with a higher risk for severe RSV infection include:

- 12 weeks old or younger at the start of RSV season
- Premature or low birth weight infants (especially those born before 29 weeks gestation)
- Chronic lung disease of prematurity
- Babies with certain types of heart defects
- Those with weak immune systems due to illness or treatments
- Additional risk factors for severe RSV infections include low birth weight, having siblings, a mother's smoking during pregnancy, exposure to secondhand smoke in the home, history of allergies and eczema, not breastfeeding, and being around children in a child care setting or living in crowded living conditions.

### When should you call the doctor?

RSV symptoms are typically at their worst on days 3 through 5 of illness. Fortunately, almost all children recover from an RSV infection on their own.

Source: [healthychildren.org](http://healthychildren.org)

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COLD: Upper Respiratory Tract Infection	BRONCHIOLITIS: Lower Respiratory Tract Infection
Cold symptoms may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fever (temperature of 100.4 or higher)</li><li>• Cough (dry or wet sounding)</li><li>• Congestion</li><li>• Runny nose</li><li>• Sneezing</li><li>• Fussiness</li><li>• Poor feeding</li></ul>	May include cold symptoms, plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fast breathing</li><li>• Flaring of the nostrils &amp; head bobbing with breathing</li><li>• Rhythmic grunting during breathing</li><li>• Belly breathing, tugging between the ribs and/or the lower neck</li><li>• Wheezing</li></ul>
How hard is your baby breathing?	
What to look for. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Chest wall retractions happen when a baby must use muscles between the ribs or in the neck to breathe. It is a sign that your baby is having to work harder than normal to breathe.</li><li>• Watch your child's rib cage as they inhale. If you see it "caving in" and forming an upside-down "V" shape under the neck, then they are working too hard.</li></ul>	

Call your pediatrician right away if your child has any:

- Symptoms of bronchiolitis (listed above)
- Symptoms of dehydration (fewer than 1 wet diaper every 8 hours)
- Pauses or difficulty breathing
- Gray or blue color to tongue, lips or skin
- Significantly decreased activity and alertness

Some children with RSV may be at increased risk of developing a bacterial infection, such as an ear infection. Call your doctor if your child has:

- Symptoms that worsen or do not start to improve after 7 days
- A fever (with a rectal temperature of 100.4°F or higher) and they are younger than 3 months of age (12 weeks).
- A fever that rises above 104°F repeatedly for a child of any age.
- Poor sleep or fussiness, chest pain, ear tugging or ear drainage

### How do doctors diagnose RSV?

Pediatricians diagnose children with a cold or bronchiolitis by asking about their symptoms and by doing a physical exam. Your pediatrician may do a nasal swab test to determine if your child has RSV or another virus. A chest x-ray and/or oxygen saturation test may also be done to check for lung congestion. Because most children recover without difficulty and because there is no treatment for RSV, these tests usually are not necessary.

### Is RSV contagious?

Yes. RSV spreads just like a common-cold viruses from one person to another. It enters the body through the nose or eyes or, usually from:

- Direct person-to-person contact with saliva, mucus, or nasal discharge.
- Unclean hands (RSV can survive 30 minutes or more on unwashed hands).
- Unclean objects or surfaces (RSV can survive up to 6 hours on surfaces, toys, keyboards, door knobs, etc).

Symptoms can appear 2 to 8 days after contact with RSV. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), people infected with RSV are usually contagious for 3 to 8 days. However, some infants and people with weakened immune systems can be contagious for as long as four weeks, even if they are not showing symptoms.

Keep in mind, children and adults can get RSV multiple times—even during a single season. Often, however, repeat infections are less severe than the first one.

There is no cure for RSV and medications, like steroids and antibiotics, do not help with RSV.

To help your child feel more comfortable, begin by doing what you would for any bad cold:

- Nasal saline with gentle suctioning to allow easier breathing and feeding.
- Cool-mist humidifier to help break up mucus and allow easier breathing.
- Fluids & frequent feedings. Make sure your child is staying hydrated. Infants with a common cold may feed more slowly or not feel like eating because they are having trouble breathing. Try to section baby's nose before trying to breast or bottle-feed. Supplementing with water or formula is unnecessary for breastfed babies. If difficult for the baby to feed at the breast, expressing breastmilk into a cup or bottle may be an option.
- Acetaminophen or ibuprofen (if older than 6 months) to help with low-grade fevers. Always avoid aspirin and cough and cold medications.

### Do babies with RSV need to be hospitalized?

Only 1% to 2% of children younger than 6 months of age with RSV infection may require a hospital stay. Those babies may need oxygen to help with breathing or an (intravenous) IV line for fluids. Most of these children can go home after 2 or 3 days. Rarely, a child may need care in a pediatric intensive care unit (PICU).

### How can you protect your children from RSV?

Wash your hands! Just as you would to prevent germs at any time, use soap and water and scrub for at least 20 seconds. Remind children to practice good hand hygiene all through the year.

### Other ways to help prevent RSV

- Vaccinate. Keep your children up to date on their immunizations and get the whole family annual flu shots. Getting vaccinated with Tdap—to protect against whooping cough is especially important for adults who are around infant—new parents, grandparents, babysitters, nannies, etc. Your child should also be immunized against COVID-19.
- Limit your baby's exposure to crowds, other children, and anyone with colds. Keep them home from school or child care when they are sick and teach them to cover their coughs and sneezes.
- Go germ-free. Disinfect objects and surfaces in your home regularly and avoid exposing your child to smoke from tobacco or other substances.
- Feed your baby breastmilk. It has unique antibodies to prevent and fight infections.

### Monoclonal antibody injections for high-risk infants

There is a monoclonal antibody treatment that may reduce the risk of severe RSV infection in some high-risk infants. Your pediatrician will let you know if your baby is a candidate.

### Hope on the horizon for RSV

Medicine is always advancing! Scientists are currently studying vaccines to prevent and medications to treat RSV. We may have more options in the future. In the meantime, rest assured that most children recover well from RSV and grow to be healthy adults.

# How can you teach your young child about different holidays?

by Kendra Moyses, MSU Extension



Learning about other holidays helps children expand their cultural world.

Try these tips for helping your school-age children learn about different holidays.

As the holiday season approaches, it's important to remember there are a diverse set of holidays available to explore. It's important children understand and express their own family traditions and beliefs, but the holiday season can be a great time to encourage exploration of other cultural traditions and beliefs. Learning about other cultures helps expand your child's experiences and world and helps create understanding across cultures.

Michigan State University Extension recommends these tips to try with your child.

- **Learn about the holidays yourself!** It can be intimidating to explain a new concept to your child when you don't feel confident on the explanation. Take some time and do some research on different holidays. Ask yourself these questions as you do some background work:
  - **Why is this holiday celebrated?**
  - **What is the historical origin of the holiday?**
  - **What are the religious values, commercial or economic interests?**
- Don't just focus on the holidays, but think broader and talk about **family traditions**. Some families may not celebrate a holiday specifically, but have a family tradition they could share.
- **Explore different cultures year-round.** Holidays are one part of exploring other cultures, but incorporate year-round opportunities to learn about and explore other cultures. Think about how your child's cultural awareness and sensitivity is increased by learning this new information.
- **Read children's books about different holidays.** Check out your local library for activities and books available.
- **Try food from different cultures** that is used to celebrate during the holidays. Not sure where to start? Check out a multi-cultural cookbook or look for recipes on the internet. Talk about why specific foods are important and part of a holiday tradition.
- **Attend a local holiday festival as a family.** While you're there, look for things that are similar to your holiday traditions.
- **Visit cultural centers or museums** and explore different holiday celebrations as it relates to that specific culture.
- **Visit with people that celebrate different holidays.**

Exploring different holiday traditions does not take away from a child's own celebration, but instead helps them make the connection of similarities between what they practice and what others practice. It helps them understand and appreciate other cultures and points of view and can enhance their appreciation for their own traditions.

## Holiday Hazards to be Aware of So You Can Celebrate Safely:



## Is it COVID-19, flu, RSV or the common cold?

### COVID-19 Onset after exposure: 2–14 days

Not everyone gets the same symptoms, or any symptoms.

Abdominal pain • Congestion • Coughing • Diarrhea • Fatigue • Fever (brief episodes) • Headache • Muscle or body aches • Nausea or vomiting • New loss of taste or smell • Shortness of breath • Sore throat

### Flu Onset after exposure: 1–4 days

Unlike COVID-19, usually comes on very suddenly.

Your child may feel perfectly fine one day and be sick the next.

Chills • Fatigue • Fever • Headache • Loss of appetite • Malaise • Muscle aches • Nausea • Runny nose • Sore throat

### RSV Onset after exposure: 4–6 days, in stages (not all at once)

Common cause of wheezing in kids under 2.

In older kids, symptoms may not appear any different than the cold.

Coughing • Decreased appetite • Fever • Runny nose • Sneezing • Wheezing

### Common cold Onset after exposure: 2–3 days

Coughing • Runny or stuffy nose • Sore throat

**Remember, there's no way to know for sure without a test. If you're at high risk for serious COVID-19 or the flu, get tested.**

Oregon Health  
Authority



## Kwanzaa Spicy Black-Eyed Peas



### Ingredients

2 slices thick-cut bacon, sliced  
5 cloves garlic, peeled  
5 dried red chiles, broken up (optional, or to taste)  
2 bay leaves  
1 pound dried black-eyed peas  
1 quart low-sodium chicken stock  
2 tomatoes, quartered  
¼ bunch fresh thyme, leaves removed  
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper  
1 lemon, juiced  
4 green onions, chopped  
¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro leaves

### Instructions

1. In a large pot over medium heat, add bacon and render until crisp. Remove the bacon to the paper towel-lined plate. To the same pot with rendered bacon fat, add the garlic, chiles, bay leaves, and dried peas and stir to combine. Pour in the chicken stock and add the tomatoes. Simmer over medium-low heat for 1 hour until peas are tender.
2. Transfer about 1 to 2 cups of the peas to a blender and puree until smooth. Place the blended peas back into the pot and stir to incorporate. Add the thyme leaves and season with salt and pepper, to taste. Continue to cook for another 15 minutes. Place in a serving dish and dress the peas with the lemon juice, green onions, cilantro and bacon before serving.

<https://villagevoiceneeds.com/2022/01/01/40227/>

This message  
needs to  
go viral.

Get your  
flu shot.



## Protect yourself and your loved ones this season



This year's flu season is expected to be more severe than normal. Protect yourself before you and others get sick.



Getting a flu shot is a safe and easy way to prevent seasonal flu. It helps you avoid severe health issues, missed workdays and even hospitalization in serious cases.



By getting a flu shot, you're helping to prevent the flu from spreading among your family, your friends and your community.



For more information or to find a **FREE** flu vaccine near you, visit [careoregon.org/flu](https://careoregon.org/flu) or scan the QR code.

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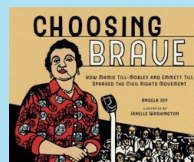
CareOregon

## Winter Book Recommendations



### Berry Song

Michaela Goade (Little, Brown)  
Ages 4-8



### Choosing Brave: How Mamie Till-Mobley and Emmett Till Sparked the Civil Rights Movement

Angela Joy, illus. by Janelle Washington  
Ages 8-12



### Ain't Burned All the Bright

Jason Reynolds and Jason Griffin (Atheneum/Dlouhy)  
Ages 12 and up