



NETWORK *Notification*

Notice Date: September 23, 2021
To: Kentucky and West Virginia CareSource Providers
From: CareSource
Subject: RSV Prevalence Alert in Young Children
Effective Date: September 1, 2021

Summary:

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) cases are on the rise in portions of the southern United States, including Kentucky and West Virginia. RSV cases typically rise in the fall and winter months, so the current trend has prompted the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to release specific guidance.

CDC Recommendations:

The CDC is encouraging broader testing for RSV among patients presenting with acute respiratory illness who test negative for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19¹. Additional recommendations include²:

1. Clinicians and caregivers should be aware of the typical clinical presentation of RSV for different age groups.
2. Clinicians should consider using rRT-PCR as the preferred method for testing for respiratory viruses.
3. Clinicians should report lab-confirmed RSV cases and suspected clusters to the local and state health departments based on routine reporting requirements.
4. Health care personnel, childcare providers and staff of long-term care facilities should avoid reporting to work while acutely ill – even if they test negative for SARS-CoV-2.

Symptoms and Treatment:

In infants younger than six months, RSV infection may result in symptoms of irritability, poor feeding, lethargy and/or apnea with or without fever¹. In older infants and young children, rhinorrhea and decreased appetite may appear one to three days before cough, often followed by sneezing, fever and sometimes wheezing¹. Symptoms in adults are typically consistent with upper respiratory tract infections, including rhinorrhea, pharyngitis, cough, headache, fatigue, and fever². There is no specific treatment for RSV infection other than symptom management.

While most RSV infections resolve within 1-2 weeks, more serious complications can include dehydration, bronchiolitis, pneumonia and respiratory failure. Appropriate testing and diagnosis can prevent the spread of RSV to other high-risk individuals including:

- Premature infants
- Very young infants, especially those 6 months and younger
- Children younger than 2 years old with chronic lung disease or congenital heart disease

- Children with suppressed immune systems
- Children who have neuromuscular disorders, including those who have difficulty swallowing or clearing mucus secretions
- Older adults, especially those 65 years and older
- Adults with chronic lung or heart disease
- Adults with weakened immune systems

CareSource recommends following CDC guidance on RSV testing and treatment.

References

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2021). Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV). Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/rsv/clinical/index.html>

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2021). Increased Interseasonal Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Activity in Parts of the Southern United States. Retrieved from <https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/2021/han00443.asp>

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