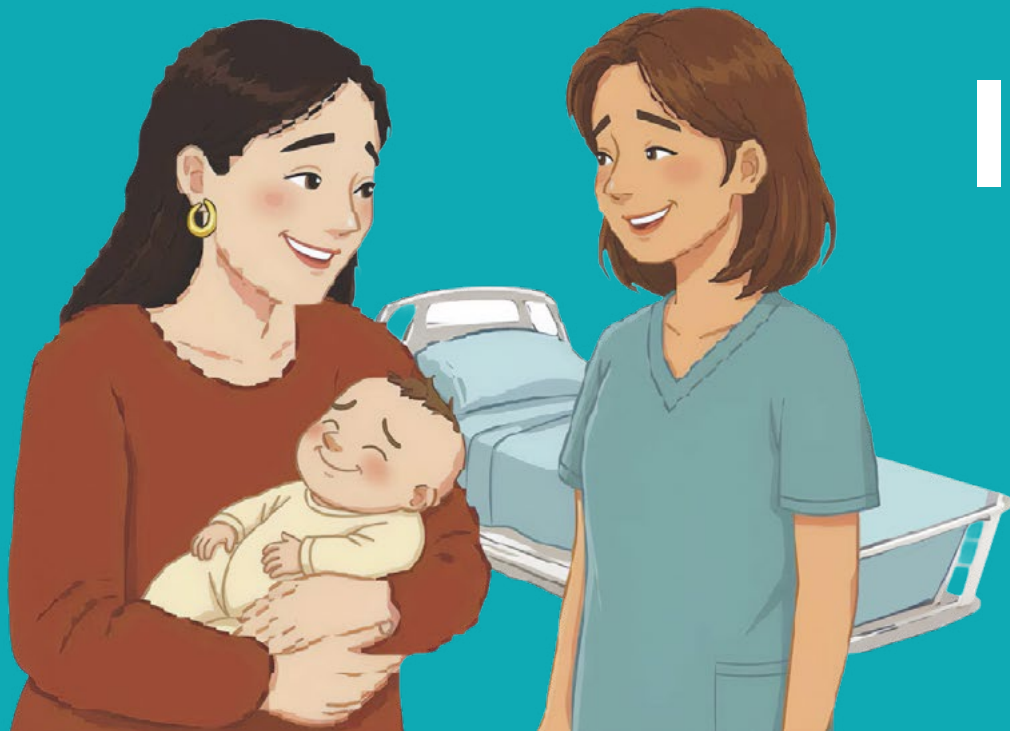




RSV

Information for Roma Parents and Families

1. What is RSV?

RSV is a common winter virus. RSV virus is highest in Ireland between September and February. 1 in 2 babies will get RSV in the first year of life. Most babies will get RSV by the time they are 2 years old.

This virus is contagious. RSV gives cold like symptoms. However, it can make some babies very sick. It can cause very bad breathing problems and some babies may need to go to hospital emergency department and may need treatment in hospital or go to intensive care.

2. Why protect your baby?

Young babies are more at risk of becoming seriously ill from RSV, especially babies during their first winter. So, it's important we protect them as much as we can.

RSV injection helps protect your baby from serious RSV illness and hospitalisation.

3. What is RSV injection?

- RSV injection, also called RSV immunisation, gives your baby protection against RSV.
- It starts protecting your baby quickly and helps protect them through the autumn and winter months.
- RSV immunisation is not a vaccine. It gives your baby ready-made antibodies to help protect them against RSV.

4. When can babies get the injection?

From September 2026, RSV immunisation will be offered to the groups described below.

It is best to get the RSV immunisation as soon as it is offered, to provide protection as early as possible, ahead of the period when RSV is most common.

5. Which babies can get RSV immunisation?

Babies born between 1 September 2026 and 28 February 2027

- Your baby will be offered RSV immunisation in the **maternity hospital** before going home.

Babies born between 1 March 2026 and 31 August 2026

- Your baby can receive catch up RSV immunisation through your **GP practice**.
- **Some babies at higher risk from RSV who are under 2 years old** for example if your baby has a weak immune system, heart or lung or muscle condition and attends the doctor in the hospital, the paediatrician, for this. The **paediatrician** looking after your baby will arrange for your baby to get the RSV injection.

6. Is the RSV Injection safe?

Yes. RSV injection is safe and effective and protects your baby from getting very unwell with RSV. The detailed scientific studies and its use in many countries have found it to be very safe. This is the third year that this RSV injection has been offered to babies in Ireland.

A different RSV injection has also been used safely for more than 20 years to protect babies at very high risk of severe RSV infection. That injection had to be given every month during the RSV season.

The RSV injection which is given now is different. Only one injection is needed and it protects babies for around five months. This covers the winter months, when RSV infections are at their highest and babies are most at risk of becoming seriously ill.

The RSV injection is safe and the RSV injection that is available now has already been given to more than 11 million babies in several countries around the world.

7. Are there any side effects?

Side effects are mild and uncommon such as redness of the skin where the baby got the injection, mild temperature and a mild rash. Less than 1 in 100 babies get a mild side effect. Most babies will get no side effects. Speak to your doctor or nurse if your baby has any side effects. The RSV injection is safe and there are no long-term side effects.

8. Can my baby have it with their other vaccines?

Your baby can have RSV injection at the same time as their routine baby vaccines. It's safe to do this, and there is no need to delay either appointment.

9. How much does it cost?

RSV injection is **free** for eligible babies.

10. Where can I get help?

Ask your doctor, nurse, GP nurse, Public Health Nurse, Midwife or other healthcare professional if you have questions about RSV immunisation. Find out more to www2.hse.ie/conditions/rsv/immunisation for more information. This leaflet is available on healthconnect.ie.

National Roma Infoline: 087 126 4606.

Protect your baby against RSV this winter.

If your baby is eligible, get RSV injection when it is offered.