

saunders street clinic

Newsletter Mar-Apr 2026

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Autumn health tips

For autumn health in Tasmania, ABC reports emphasize staying active to combat seasonal blues, eating well to prevent chronic illness, and managing risks of falls for older residents as weather cools. Key advice includes fostering social connections, utilizing community resources, and accessing local health services for mental and physical well-being.

Autumn Wellbeing & Physical Health

- **Preventative Health:** Focus on diet to prevent chronic conditions, with resources available via Eat Well Tasmania to encourage healthier, locally sourced food choices.
- **Staying Active:** As Hobart faces lower sunlight hours in autumn/winter, maintaining an active lifestyle is crucial for managing seasonal mood changes and energy levels.
- **Gardening Benefits:** Starting an autumn edible garden (e.g., using "no-dig" methods) provides both fresh produce and significant mental health benefits.

- **Falls Prevention:** For those over 65, exercise is the primary strategy to prevent falls as the weather turns cold and damp, a topic frequently covered on ABC Hobart's Tasmania Afternoons.

Mental Health and Support

- **Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD):** Hobart has a high prevalence of SAD, characterized by low energy and mood changes. Recommendations include socializing, increasing sunlight exposure, and filling your social media feed with positive content.
- **Mental Health Support:** For immediate counselling and navigation of the Tasmanian mental health system, call Access Mental Health at **1800 332 388** (available 24/7).
- **MindStep Service:** Free telephone/online support for low-intensity mental health needs is available, managed by Remedy Healthcare.

Emergency & Urgent Care Options

- **Medicare Urgent Care Clinics:** Located in Hobart, Bridgewater, Launceston, Devonport and now Burnie for urgent, non-life-threatening illness and injury.
- **After-hours Care:** Visit tasafterhours.com to locate open GPs or pharmacies in Tasmania.
- **Care@home:** Register with Care@home on 1800 973 363 for 24/7 virtual care if you have respiratory symptoms or test positive for COVID-19.
- **Emergencies:** Call 000 or visit the nearest emergency department for serious, life-threatening conditions.

Source: ABC Tasmania

Who should get protected against RSV

Anyone who wants to protect themselves against RSV can talk to their health professional about getting vaccinated.

The Australian Immunisation Handbook recommends RSV vaccination for [specific groups](#) including:

- pregnant women at 28 to 36 weeks of pregnancy
- people aged 75 years and older and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 60 years and older
- people with medical risk factors for severe RSV disease aged 60 years and older.

RSV monoclonal antibodies are recommended for:

- young infants up to 8 months of age whose mothers did not receive RSV vaccine in pregnancy, or who were vaccinated less than 2 weeks before delivery
- young infants up to 8 months of age who are at increased risk of severe RSV disease, regardless of their mother's vaccination status

- children aged 8 months to under 2 years who have medical risk factors for severe RSV disease in their second RSV season.

Maternal vaccine

The maternal RSV vaccine (Abrysvo®) is **free under the [National Immunisation Program \(NIP\)](#)** and is recommended for women at 28–36 weeks pregnancy (prior to 37 weeks) to protect their baby.

When a pregnant woman receives the maternal RSV vaccine, their immune system produces antibodies against RSV in the first couple of weeks after vaccination. These antibodies are transferred through the placenta to the baby's bloodstream. The antibodies help protect the infant against RSV from birth.

The process of providing antibodies from mother to baby is a form of passive immunisation and provides protection to the infant for up to 6 months from birth.

Infant immunisation

States and territories provide the RSV monoclonal antibody Beyfortus™ (nirsevimab) for free to eligible infants and children including:

- infants up to 8 months :
 - whose mother did not receive the RSV vaccine during pregnancy, or
 - who were born within 2 weeks after the mother receiving an RSV vaccine, or
 - who have a condition or circumstance that increases their risk of severe RSV disease regardless of their mother's vaccination status.
- young children aged 8 months to under 2 years who have medical risk factors for severe RSV disease in their second RSV season.

Speak to your health professional or [contact your state or territory Department of Health](#) to find out more.

Vaccines for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, older people, and those medically at risk

From 15 May 2026, RSV vaccines will be funded through the National Immunisation Program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 60 years and over and adults aged 75 years and over.

There are no RSV vaccines funded through the National Immunisation Program for people with medical risk conditions.

You can purchase RSV vaccines privately but you may need a prescription and you cannot be reimbursed through the National Immunisation Program. Speak with your trusted health professional for more information.

RSV vaccines and monoclonal antibodies

RSV vaccines and (monoclonal antibodies) come on their own and only offer protection against RSV. They are not a combination product and do not offer protection against any other diseases.

- [ABRYSVO®*](#)
- [AREXVY*](#)

- [BEYFORTUS™](#) (nirsevimab)⁺ (monoclonal antibodies)
- [SYNAGIS®](#) (monoclonal antibodies)

* Indicates NIP funded vaccine

⁺ Indicates state or territory funded monoclonal antibodies

All RSV vaccines and monoclonal antibodies that are available for use in Australia are listed in the [Australian Immunisation Handbook](#) under [Vaccines, dosage and administration](#).

The Therapeutic Goods Administration website provides [product information and consumer medicine information](#) for RSV vaccines.

RSV vaccines or monoclonal antibodies should not be given to people who have had:

- [anaphylaxis](#) after a previous dose of the same RSV vaccine or product
- [anaphylaxis](#) after any component of an RSV vaccine or product.

Read more about [getting vaccinated](#).

Possible side effects of RSV vaccination

You may experience minor side effects following vaccination. Most reactions are mild and only last a couple of days and you will recover without any problems.

Common side effects of RSV vaccines include:

- pain and redness at the injection site
- fatigue
- headache
- muscle pains.

Talk to your health professional about possible side effects of the RSV vaccines, or if you have side effects that worry you.

The [Consumer Medicine Information](#) available on the Therapeutic Goods Administration website lists the ingredients and side effects of each vaccine.

Learn more about the [possible side effects of vaccination](#).

Where to get vaccinated

You can get your vaccine from a range of health professionals. Find out where and more about your vaccination visit at [getting vaccinated](#).

Not all health services will offer the free maternal RSV vaccine.

Check with your health professional or health service to find out:

- if they can provide the NIP vaccine
- when you can book in to have the vaccine
- if there is a consultation or service fee required to get the free vaccine.