

RSV and Beyfortus

RSV, or Respiratory Syncytial Virus, is a common winter virus that can cause infants and young children to develop wheezing, fevers, and difficulty breathing. Each year in the US, 1.5-2% of healthy, full-term infants are hospitalized due to RSV (and more in older adult populations). There is typically no treatment for RSV and babies sick enough to be hospitalized often need oxygen until their immune system is able to fight off the virus.

You may have heard there is a new injectable medicine available to prevent severe RSV illness in infants. This medication, "Beyfortus", gives immunity against the virus, but is not technically a vaccine. As a monoclonal antibody, this medicine gives infection-fighting power to the body directly, by giving antibodies through the shot (which is different from vaccines, which turn on your body's antibody-making power). Babies from birth to 8 months old (and some older babies with chronic health conditions) are eligible for this medication, which can reduce the risk of illness requiring hospitalization from RSV by up to 80%. This protection lasts approximately five months, so it should be given in late September or early October. It is recommended that babies born during RSV season receive a dose if their mother did not get vaccinated against RSV during weeks 32-36 gestation.

Safety profiles of the medication in the trial were excellent, showing only local reactions to the skin in a small percentage of babies.

Because it will be available widely for the first time this fall, we don't know how much of (or if) insurance companies will cover this

medication. Even if it is "covered" by your insurance, this may be applied to your deductible rather than covered at 100% like most vaccines. The cost to purchase the drug from the manufacturer is very high. This means that families might be responsible for the high cost of this medication if insurance doesn't cover it in full. We have decided on a maximum out-of-pocket that you would be responsible for in any scenario of \$650 per dose.

You may consider calling your insurance company. See how much or IF they might cover Beyfortus for your newborn or infant under 8 months of age. If they won't cover it, ask them why not and ask them to change their policy. When you call your insurance, they may ask you for CPT codes and possibly a diagnosis code.

CPT Code - this is based on your child's weight at time of service. It will either be 90380 (under 11 lbs) or 90381 (11 lbs and over). If your child is right around 11 lbs, it may not hurt to ask them to check both.

Administration code - 96380.

Diagnosis Code - Beyfortus ICD-10 code is Z29.11.

For more information about RSV, click here:

[HealthyChildren.org - RSV](https://www.healthychildren.org/RSV)