

Increased Interseasonal Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Activity in Parts of the Southern United States June 11, 2021

The Winnebago County Health Department (WCHD) is notifying clinicians and caregivers about increased interseasonal respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) activity across parts of the Southern United States.

WCHD encourages healthcare providers to consider broader testing for RSV among patients presenting with acute respiratory illness who test negative for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. Infants, young children, and older adults with chronic medical conditions are at risk of severe disease from RSV infection.

Recommendations

1. Clinicians should be aware of the typical clinical presentation of RSV for different age groups.
2. Clinicians should **consider testing** patients with
 - a. A negative SARS-CoV-2 test and acute respiratory illness or
 - b. The age-specific symptoms for non-SARS-CoV-2 respiratory pathogens, such as RSV.
3. Clinicians should report laboratory-confirmed RSV cases and suspected clusters of severe respiratory illness to the WCHD Communicable Disease Program.
4. Healthcare 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.

A real-time reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction (rRT-PCR) is the preferred method for testing for respiratory viruses.

RSV Transmission occurs via respiratory droplets when a person coughs or sneezes, and through direct contact with a contaminated surface.

Symptoms of RSV show within 4 to 6 days after exposure.

Infants Younger than 6 Months	Older Infants & Young Children	Adults
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irritability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rhinorrhea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper respiratory tract infections (including rhinorrhea, pharyngitis)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor feeding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreased appetite 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cough
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lethargy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cough 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headache
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apnea (with or without fever) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sneezing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fatigue
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wheezing sometimes 	

Additional resources for clinicians and laboratories can be found at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention <https://www.cdc.gov/rsv/>.

Should you have any questions, please contact the WCHD’s Communicable Disease Program directly at 815-720-4050.