

Top 3 reasons for hospitalization among US infants less than 1 year of age

Bringing home your baby

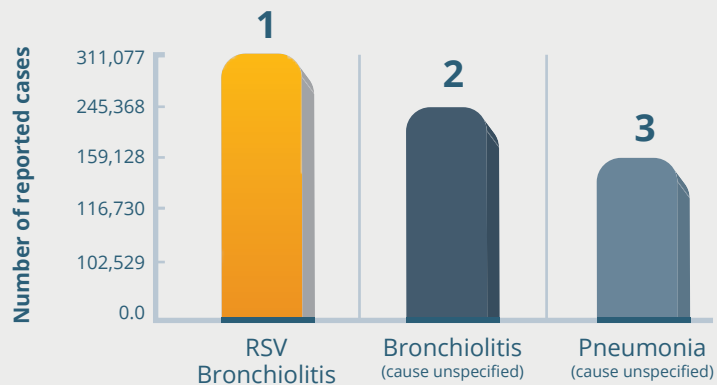
Congratulations! The moment you've been waiting for is finally here! Bringing your baby home can be both exciting and scary at the same time.

Because babies' immune systems are not fully developed, they are more at risk for catching germs, which can lead to infections, when compared to other children and adults.

Your baby has been cleared for discharge from the hospital

Follow your healthcare provider's instructions and visit your pediatric healthcare provider or clinic for regular evaluations, medical care, and immunizations.

Top 3 diagnoses at discharge among hospitalized infants less than 1 year of age in the US (1997-2000)



The good news is that there is a lot that can be done to help **prevent the hospitalization** of your baby!

Please see below for prevention tips and symptoms to be aware of:

RSV Disease

Respiratory syncytial (sin-SISH-uhl) virus (RSV) is a common virus that generally causes mild to moderate cold-like symptoms in most babies. But it can cause serious lung infections, such as bronchiolitis and/or pneumonia, in babies born early (less than 36 weeks). RSV season usually starts in the fall and runs through the spring, but it can be different in certain parts of the country.

Signs and symptoms in your baby may include:

- Coughing or wheezing that does not stop
- Fast or troubled breathing
- A fever (especially if it is greater than 100.4 °F [rectal] in infants under 3 months of age)
- A bluish color around the mouth or fingernails
- Flared nostrils and/or increased chest retractions when trying to breathe

Tips for Prevention

There are some simple ways to help prevent RSV infection in babies.



Wash your hands thoroughly before touching your baby, and ask others to do the same



Don't let anyone smoke in your home or near your baby



Wash your baby's toys, clothes, and bedding often



Keep your baby away from:
— Crowds and young children
— People with colds



Speak to your healthcare provider about other options available to help prevent severe RSV disease

Bronchiolitis

Bronchiolitis (brong-kee-oh-LI-tis) is an inflammation of the small airways in the lungs, usually caused by a viral infection. It begins as a mild cold but over a period of 2 to 3 days, may develop into a serious lung infection.

Signs and symptoms in your baby may include:

- Troubled or rapid breathing
- Fever. A rectal temperature greater than 100.4 °F (38 °C) in infants under 3 months of age is cause for concern
- Gasping for breath • Coughing or wheezing • Flared (spread out) nostrils and/or increased chest retractions when trying to breathe
- Bluish lips or fingertips

Prevention:

Bronchiolitis is not easy to prevent because the viruses that cause it (RSV is one of them) are common in our environment. However, careful attention to hand washing can help prevent the spread of viruses that cause bronchiolitis.

Pneumonia

Pneumonia (noo-MOHN-yuh) is an infection of the lungs. Many different germs cause it, including bacteria, as well as viruses like RSV and influenza. Pneumonia can range from mild to severe and can be very serious.

Signs and symptoms in your baby may include:

- Cough with greenish, yellow, or bloody mucus
- Fever with shaking chills. In infants under 3 months of age, a rectal temperature greater than 100.4 °F (38 °C) is cause for concern
- Rapid, shallow breathing or shortness of breath
- Exhaustion

Prevention:

There are some simple ways to help prevent RSV infection in babies.

- Wash your hands frequently, especially after blowing your nose, before you touch your baby
- Vaccines can help prevent certain types of pneumonia in children. Speak to your healthcare provider about what is right for your baby