



COUNTY OF ORANGE – HEALTH CARE AGENCY

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: October 29, 2022

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OC Health Care Agency Strongly Encourages Preventive Measures Against RSV Due to High Hospitalizations

(Santa Ana, CA) – Due to record numbers of pediatric hospitalizations and daily emergency room visits for respiratory infections, the County Health Officer and OC Health Care Agency (HCA) Medical Directors are strongly encouraging Orange County residents to follow disease preventive measures.

“Orange County is seeing very high numbers respiratory illness, specifically Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) severely impacting capacity in our pediatric hospitals,” said **Dr. Regina Chinsio-Kwong**, County Health Officer. and HCA's Chief Medical Officer. “RSV can severely affect young infants and children and we are encouraging residents to take precautions, especially with groups of children.”

Seek medical attention immediately if your child is showing warning signs, which may include having trouble breathing, showing signs of dehydration (i.e., no urine in over 8 hours, dark urine, very dry mouth and no tears), has a persistent or high fever, or looks or acts very sick. Call your primary care provider, pediatrician, urgent care or hospital to help navigate steps to recommended care before your visit.

Preventative actions:

- Do not go to school or work when you are symptomatic.
- Avoid close contact such as kissing, hugging, and sharing cups or eating utensils with people who are sick, and when you are sick.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your upper shirt sleeve, not your hands.
- Mask when indoors or large group settings.
- Wash your hands frequently, especially before and after eating and using the bathroom.
- Get your flu shot and COVID-19 vaccines to prevent complications from these viral illnesses.

Additionally, parents and caregivers should keep young children with acute respiratory illnesses out of childcare, even if they have tested negative for COVID-19.

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) infections occur primarily during the fall and winter cold and flu season, causing bronchiolitis and pneumonia in children under one year of age and placing infants, young children, and older adults, with chronic medical conditions, at risk for more severe disease. Annually, RSV leads to approximately 58,000 hospitalizations with 100-500 deaths among children younger than 5 years old and 177,000 hospitalizations with 14,000 deaths among adults, aged 65 years or older.

Providers are encouraged to review California Department of Public Health Alert [here](#) and American Academy of Pediatrics guidance options [here](#).

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