



09/01/2026

Preparation for Respiratory Virus Season: Recommendation to Begin RSV Immunization for Pregnant Women and Infants, and Related Immunization Guidance

The Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) is issuing this health advisory to summarize immunization recommendations for clinicians in preparation for the respiratory virus season.

Background

Respiratory virus season in Arkansas typically starts in October, runs through March, and includes viruses such as respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), influenza, and COVID-19. Getting vaccinated is the best defense to prevent [hospitalization and death](#) from these viruses. Vaccination is particularly important for people who are at higher risk, including infants and young children, pregnant women, adults with chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, older adults, and those with an immunocompromising condition.

RSV Immunization Recommendations for Clinicians

ADH encourages providers to **document administered doses** of the RSV vaccine in [WebIZ](#) to coordinate care between maternity providers and pediatric providers.

Pregnant Women

- [Begin RSV vaccination for pregnant women during 32-36 weeks gestation, starting on September 1, 2026](#) until January 31, 2027, using the maternal RSV vaccine ("[Abrysvo](#)").

Infants and Young Children

- [Begin RSV immunization for infants up to 7 months of age starting on October 1, 2026](#), until March 31, 2027, using a RSV monoclonal antibody ([nirsevimab](#) or [clesrovimab](#)) within 1 week of birth, ideally during the birth hospitalization or as soon as possible after discharge, typically if:
 - The mother did not receive maternal RSV vaccine during pregnancy, OR
 - The mother's RSV vaccination status is unknown, OR
 - The infant was born within 14 days of maternal RSV vaccination
- [Begin RSV immunization for children 8-19 months of age at high risk of severe disease, starting on October 1, 2026](#), and continue through March 31, 2027, using only nirsevimab.
- [Vaccines for Children \(VFC\)](#) providers can give nirsevimab and clesrovimab at no cost for VFC-eligible children (<19 years old, who are Medicaid eligible or enrolled, uninsured, underinsured, or American Indian/Alaska Native).
 - Ordering: Private providers receive an immunization ordering link from their VFC representative at the beginning of each month.

To sign up for the Arkansas Health Alert Network to receive similar alerts about urgent public health issues in Arkansas, [click here](#).

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Older Adults

- [Provide one-time RSV vaccination for all adults ages 75 and older and adults ages 50–74 who are at an increased risk of severe RSV illness](#) using a Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved vaccine (“[Arexvy](#)”, “[mResvia](#)”, or “[Abrysvo](#)”).

Additional Information

- Additional guidance is available from the [Centers for Disease Control & Prevention \(CDC\)](#), [American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists \(ACOG\)](#), [American Academy of Pediatrics \(AAP\)](#), and [American Academy of Family Physicians \(AAFP\)](#).
- Routine childhood immunizations are available at all ADH local health units. Adults may talk to their healthcare provider or local pharmacy about respiratory virus immunizations.

Other Related Immunization Guidance for Clinicians

Influenza

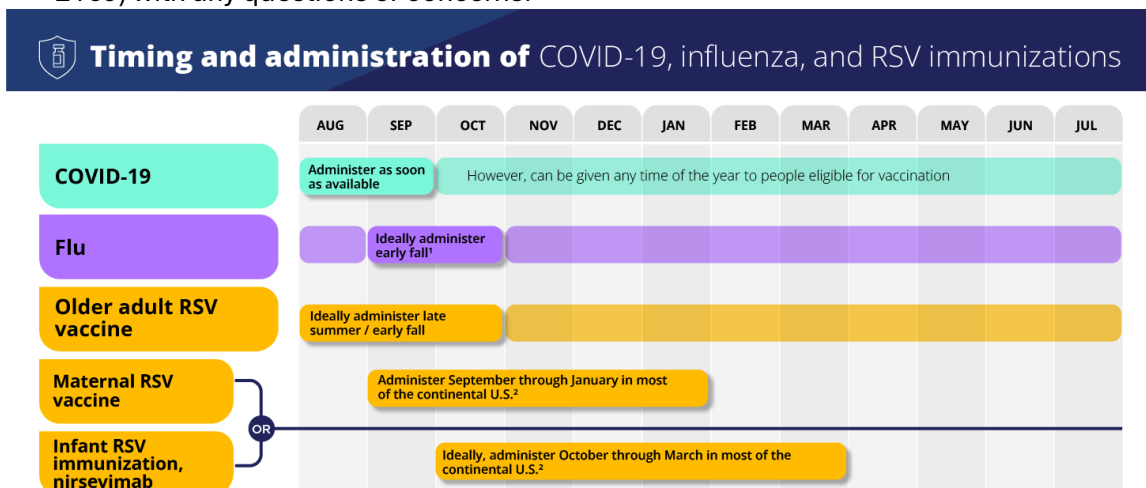
- [Provide routine annual influenza vaccination](#) to protect against severe influenza for all people ages 6 months and older.
 - Additional guidance is available from the [CDC](#), [AAP](#), [ACOG](#), and [AAFP](#). Prepare to order updated 2026-2027 formulations of influenza vaccines.
 - VFC Ordering: VFC influenza vaccines are anticipated to be available by September. Private providers will order VFC influenza vaccines through [WebIZ](#).

COVID-19

- [Provide routine annual COVID-19 vaccination](#) to protect against severe COVID-19 for people ages 6 months and older with shared clinical decision-making.
 - Additional guidance is available from the [CDC](#), [ACOG](#), [AAP](#), and [AAFP](#). Prepare to order updated 2026-2027 formulations of COVID-19 vaccines.
 - VFC Ordering: Information for ordering VFC COVID-19 vaccines is forthcoming.

Additional Information

- Please contact ADH Immunization Branch (immunization.section@arkansas.gov, 501-661-2169) with any questions or concerns.



¹ Children who need 2 doses should receive their first dose as soon as possible (including during July and August). One dose of flu vaccine can be considered for pregnant people in their third trimester during July and August.

² In jurisdictions with RSV seasonality that differs from most of the continental United States, including Alaska, southern Florida, Guam, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, U.S.-affiliated Pacific Islands, and U.S. Virgin Islands, providers should follow state, local, or territorial guidance. However, nirsevimab may be administered outside of routine seasonal administration (i.e., October through March) based on local RSV activity and other special circumstances. For infants born during October through March, nirsevimab should be administered in the first week of life—ideally during the birth hospitalization.

