

NEWS BRIEF

Pediatricians Warn of Off-season Spike in Colds and Respiratory Viruses

The number of new COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths in the United States continue to be at relatively low levels, but there are now concerns about unusual off-season spikes in colds and respiratory viruses among children.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a [health advisory](#) stating that respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) activity is unexpectedly spreading in southern states. As a result, doctors are urging parents across the country to keep their guard up this summer.

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“The cases of respiratory viruses are ramping back up, and it coincides with decreasing COVID-19 precautions such as social distancing efforts, masking, hand-washing and the like.”

- James Antoon, MD, PhD, FAAP, assistant professor of Pediatrics at Children’s Hospital at Vanderbilt

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RSV, which usually spikes during winter months, causes the common cold and can be treated at home. However, for infants, young children and older adults, RSV can be more severe and lead to bronchiolitis and pneumonia. Furthermore, each year RSV sends 75,000 to 125,000 children to the hospital and kills as many as 200.

Similar to the coronavirus and influenza, RSV spreads through respiratory droplets in the air and on surfaces. However, it’s more likely than the coronavirus to remain on skin and other surfaces.

What’s Next?

It’s important for parents to be aware that viruses, including RSV, are spreading at an unusual time of the year, so infants and children with underlying health conditions should be closely monitored.

There are many overlapping symptoms between COVID-19 and other virus-related illnesses, so it’s best to reach out to a pediatrician with any questions. Generally, parents and caregivers should watch for signs of illness.

For mild to moderate symptoms of fever, runny nose, cough, gastrointestinal trouble or breathing issues, caregivers should contact a doctor.

For more severe symptoms—like fast breathing, belly breathing, noisy breathing or signs of lethargy—it’s recommended to go directly to urgent care or an emergency room for further evaluation.

JP Griffin Group will keep you updated with any notable changes.



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