



Cowlitz County Health and Human Services

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Respiratory Illness (RSV) Toolkit for Schools and Childcare Facilities Resource Guide

RSV Quick Reference

RSV Symptoms	Runny nose, congestion, decrease in appetite, coughing, sneezing, fever and wheezing. Symptoms may come in stages and not all at once.
Incubation Period	The usual period from infection to the time symptoms appear (incubation period) is 2 to 8 days after exposure. Usually, four to six days.
Period of Communicability	Persons with RSV are usually contagious for 3 to 8 days and may become contagious one to two days before symptom onset.
Treatment	Most people with RSV illness recover without treatment and on their own in 8 to 15 days. Typical treatment consists primarily of supportive care such as rest, ensuring adequate fluid intake, and using over the counter medications directed to manage fever and discomfort.
Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practice good hygiene by covering your coughs and sneezes, washing or sanitizing your hands often, and cleaning frequently touched surfaces. • Help children wash their hands. Teach them how to wash their hands and make sure they wash them often. • Throw away used tissues and teach children to cover their mouths and nose when they cough or sneeze. • Take steps for cleaner air, such as bringing in fresh outside air, purifying indoor air, or gathering outdoors. • Stay home and away from others when you are sick.
When to Report to CCHHS	When absenteeism linked to Respiratory illness is $\geq 10\%$ in a specific school and/or classroom.
How to Report to CCHHS	Upload a line list securely online OR fax a line list to the secure fax line at (360) 425-7531. If the online upload link does not work, copy and paste it into an internet browser: https://apps.co.cowlitz.wa.us/Forms/SecureUploadHHS

Respiratory syncytial virus, or RSV, is a common respiratory virus that infects the nose, throat, and lungs. RSV symptoms make it difficult to distinguish it from the common cold or other respiratory viruses (like the flu or COVID-19). RSV spreads in the fall and winter along with other respiratory viruses. It usually peaks in December and January.

What are the Reporting Requirements?

- In Cowlitz County, CCHHS asks that schools report the following:
 - When absenteeism linked to respiratory illness is $> 10\%$ in a specific school and/or classroom

How do I report an outbreak to Cowlitz County Health & Human Services?

- To report a suspected or confirmed outbreak, schools can upload a line list securely [online](#) OR fax a line list to the secure fax line at (360) 425-7531. If the online upload link does not work, it can be copied and pasted into an internet browser: <https://apps.co.cowlitz.wa.us/Forms/SecureUploadHHS>. If schools have questions or aren't sure if they are having an outbreak, CCHHS can be reached via phone at (360) 414-5599 extension 6431.

How to reduce the spread

- Encourage students, parents, and staff to take every day preventative actions to stop the spread of germs
- Encourage students and staff to stay home when sick
- Encourage hand hygiene among students and staff
- Encourage students and staff to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or their bent arm. If they use a tissue, they should put the used tissue in a trash can and wash their hands.
- Encourage routine surface cleaning through education, policy and the provision of supplies.

Infection Prevention Control Measures

Hand hygiene

- Teach students and staff to wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, dry hands with a paper towel, and use the paper towel to turn off the faucet. If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty, and alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol may be used
- Include handwashing time in student schedules
- Provide adequate supplies, including clean and functional handwashing stations, soap, paper towels, and alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Respiratory Hygiene and Cough Etiquette

- Encourage students and staff to keep their hands away from their eyes, nose, and mouth
- Teach and encourage students and staff to cover their mouth and nose when they cough or sneeze
- Properly discard used tissue in trash cans and sanitize hands after
- Provide adequate supplies within easy reach, including tissues and no-touch trash cans

Cleaning and Disinfection

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects that are touched often, such as desks, countertops, doorknobs, computer keyboards, hands-on learning items, faucet handles, and phones.
- Use general cleaning products that you normally use. Always follow product label directions.
- Provide adequate supplies, such as general EPA-registered cleaning products, gloves, disinfecting wipes, and no-touch trash cans.

Additional Resources

- CDC:
 - [About Respiratory Syncytial Virus Infection \(RSV\)](#)
 - [Parent Factsheet for Infection Prevention in schools](#)
 - [How To Clean and Disinfect Early Care and Education Settings](#)
 - [Preventing Spread of Infections in K-12 Schools](#)

- Washington State Department of Health:
 - [Infectious Disease Control Guide for School Staff](#) (pages 101-102)
 - [Safe Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidance for Schools](#)