

ADVISORY

SUBJECT:	Fall 2023 Vaccines – Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)
Date:	October 30, 2023
Pages:	3
To:	Physicians, Hospitals, Pharmacies
From:	Dr. Matthew Tenenbaum, Associate Medical Officer of Health

- RSVpreF3 vaccine (Arexvy) has been approved by Health Canada for the prevention of RSV-related lower respiratory tract disease in adults age 60+.
- This fall, older adults in long term care homes, elder care lodges, and some retirement homes will be eligible for publicly funded vaccine doses.
- Older adults in the community can access this vaccine at local pharmacies with a physician prescription; the cost is approx. \$250 per dose.
- WDGPH will be offering this vaccine (not publicly funded) at our office clinics later this fall.

On August 4, 2023, Health Canada approved the RSVpreF3 (Arexvy) vaccine for adults 60 years of age and older. RSVpreF3 is indicated for the prevention of lower respiratory tract disease caused by respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

RSV is a significant cause of morbidity and mortality during the fall/winter season, particularly in older adults. Rates of RSV-related hospitalization among adults increased tenfold in Ontario during the 2010s.¹ Though older adults (65+) account for only 22% of RSV-related hospitalizations, they account for 85% of RSV-related deaths.²

RSVpreF3 Vaccine (Arexvy)

The new RSVpreF3 (Arexvy) vaccine is an inactivated vaccine containing recombinant RSV glycoprotein F, stabilized in its prefusion confirmation. It is administered intramuscularly, as a single dose; there is not currently any recommendation for RSV boosters in future seasons.

RSVpreF3 must be reconstituted prior to administration by mixing the antigen (in powder form) with an adjuvant suspension. Additional information can be found in the product monograph.³

The efficacy of RSVpreF3 against RSV-related lower respiratory tract disease (RSV-LRTD) was 82.6% over the first respiratory season in adults 60 years of age and older.⁴ Efficacy exceeded 90% in the 70-79 year old subgroup, and in those with pre-existing comorbidities of interest. Efficacy against RSV-LRTD was 56.1% in the second respiratory season (combined 74.5% efficacy for both seasons).⁵

Guidance

There is presently no NACI guidance regarding the use of RSV vaccines; this is expected in 2024. The US Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommends that adults aged ≥60 years may receive a single dose of RSV vaccine, using shared clinical decision-making.⁵

WDG Public Health Physicians Advisory Fall 2023 Vaccines – Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) October 30, 2023 Page 2 of 3

Publicly Funded Vaccine Availability

This fall there will be a provincial, publicly funded RSV program targeting older adults in longterm care homes, elder care lodges, and retirement homes that provide dementia care. WDGPH is currently working with these settings to coordinate vaccine administration for eligible individuals. The province will evaluate this program to inform plans for the 2024-25 RSV season.

Non-Publicly Funded Vaccine Availability

RSVpreF3 is available in the community for patients with private insurance or the ability to pay out-of-pocket. Each dose costs approx. \$250.

Physicians can provide their patients with a prescription which they would bring to their pharmacy for dispensing. Once dispensed, the vaccine should be administered in the physician's office. Pharmacists are <u>not</u> presently authorized to independently administer RSV vaccines in pharmacies, though this may change in the future.

WDGPH will be offering non-publicly funded RSV vaccine at our office locations, beginning later this fall. Please refer to the <u>WDGPH website</u> for the latest information.

Co-Administration with Other Vaccines

The Ontario Immunization Advisory Committee advises that RSVpreF3 should not routinely be administered within 14 days of a COVID-19 or influenza vaccine.⁶ This is a precautionary recommendation intended to assist with identifying AEFIs. Administering vaccines closer together is not expected to impact the safety or efficacy of either vaccine.

Co-administering RSVpreF3 with other vaccines (or using an interval of <14 days) is reasonable and may reduce barriers to immunization for patients at higher risk of disease. It should be given strong consideration particularly when the patient may not otherwise receive all of their recommended vaccine doses.

RSV Products for Infants & Pregnant Women

RSVpreF3 (Arexvy) is only authorized for adults 60 years of age and older. A different RSV vaccine (Abrysvo) is currently being reviewed by Health Canada. In the US, Abrysvo is approved for older adults and for pregnant individuals.⁷

There are not currently any RSV vaccines authorized for infants. However, high-risk infants can access the immunoglobulin palivizumab (Synagis) through the RSV Prophylaxis for High-Risk Infants Program. Additional information can be found on the Ministry of Health website.⁸

Adverse Events Following Immunization

Please report any adverse events following immunization to WDGPH using the <u>provincial AEFI</u> reporting form.⁹ Completed forms should be faxed to: 519-836-7215.

WDG Public Health Physicians Advisory Fall 2023 Vaccines – Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) October 30, 2023 Page 3 of 3

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For more information, please contact:

Name/Title:	Dr. Matthew Tenenbaum, Associate Medical Officer of Health
Email:	matthew.tenenbaum@wdgpublichealth.ca
Website:	www.wdgpublichealth.ca