



*Preventing RSV with Antibodies:*

# Beyfortus and Synagis

Respiratory Syncytial Virus, or RSV for short, is a common illness that can affect the lungs and make babies and young children very sick. More people get sick with RSV during the fall and winter months, usually from early October through February.

**The good news is that scientists have developed special medications to help prevent RSV: nirsevimab, also known as Beyfortus™, and palivizumab, also called SYNAGIS®.**

Beyfortus and Synagis are monoclonal antibodies (protective proteins). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) have approved medications that include these antibodies to keep babies and young children healthy.

## What is RSV?

RSV is a virus that acts like a common cold for most people. However, babies and children often have more serious RSV symptoms including difficulty breathing, coughing, and fever.

Babies and young children may have more severe reactions to RSV because their immune systems are still developing. Some children with RSV will need hospital care. The CDC recommends treating children with Beyfortus or Synagis to keep them safe from RSV before they get sick.



## Beyfortus: The Protector

Nirsevimab, or Beyfortus, is a newer medicine for RSV prevention. It's a superhero antibody that fights off RSV and helps the body create a shield against the virus. This shield lasts for a long time, providing protection throughout RSV season.

### Beyfortus

- > Recommended for babies younger than 8 months.
- > Only 1 shot each season.
- > Provides protection for around 5 months.
- > Available for Medicaid Members at a doctor's office.
- > Available for Community First Commercial HMO Members at either a pharmacy or a doctor's office.

Babies who are born during RSV season in the fall and winter months (October through February) and those who are entering their first RSV season probably should get the Beyfortus immunization. Ask your child's doctor to be sure. Some high-risk babies from ages 9-18 months should also get Beyfortus during their second RSV season.

## Synagis: The Defender

Palivizumab, or Synagis, has been around for a while and is like an old, experienced guard that acts like a defender against RSV. Synagis is given as a shot once a month during RSV season.

### Synagis

- > Provides protection for about one month.
- > 5 shots are recommended during each RSV season.
- > Available at a doctor's office.

Doctors usually give Synagis to babies with a high risk of severe RSV infections. Doctors consider factors like premature birth, lung problems, and other health issues to decide which children need Synagis.

Most children need to have either Beyfortus or Synagis, based on what their doctor decides, but not both.

## How These Medicines Work

Both Beyfortus and Synagis are monoclonal antibodies, which means they are special protective proteins that specifically target RSV. These antibodies are like the antibodies an older child or adult with a healthy immune system naturally develops against RSV. Because babies and high-risk toddlers do not have fully developed immune systems, they need these antibodies to protect them.

When a baby gets one of these medications, their immune system will recognize and attack RSV to protect them. With this extra defense, RSV is much less likely to make them sick.

In the fight against RSV, Beyfortus and Synagis are like the shield and the sword. Beyfortus forms a strong, long-lasting defense, while Synagis provides short-term protection. These antibodies help babies and young kids fight off RSV, keeping them healthy and happy during RSV season.

Preventing RSV is important. RSV can cause serious breathing problems and hospital stays, especially for little ones. Beyfortus and Synagis can save lives. Thanks to science and medicine, we have powerful tools to protect our little ones from this common virus.

Sources:

1. Nirsevimab (Beyfortus). In: Lexi-Drugs. Lexi-Comp, Inc. Topic 141488 Version 9.0. Accessed September 22, 2023. Available at: [https://www.uptodate.com/contents/nirsevimab-drug-information?source=auto\\_suggest&selectedTitle=1~1---1~2---beyfor&search=beyfortus](https://www.uptodate.com/contents/nirsevimab-drug-information?source=auto_suggest&selectedTitle=1~1---1~2---beyfor&search=beyfortus)
2. Palivizumab (Synagis). In Lexi-Drugs. Lexi-Comp, Inc. Topic 9849 Version 162.0. Accessed September 22, 2023. Available at: [https://www.uptodate.com/contents/palivizumab-drug-information?search=synagis&source=panel\\_search\\_result&selectedTitle=1~32&usage\\_type=panel&kp\\_tab=drug\\_general&display\\_rank=1](https://www.uptodate.com/contents/palivizumab-drug-information?search=synagis&source=panel_search_result&selectedTitle=1~32&usage_type=panel&kp_tab=drug_general&display_rank=1)

