



In This Issue:

- ◆ Respiratory Syncytial Virus 2012-13 Update
- ◆ Recommendations for Healthcare Providers

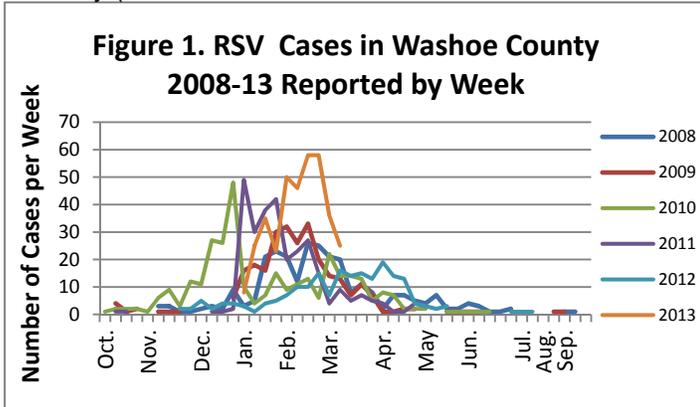
RESPIRATORY SYNCYTIAL VIRUS (RSV) UPDATE

INTRODUCTION

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) is a very common virus that leads to mild, cold-like symptoms in adults and older healthy children. Most people have been exposed to RSV by the time they are two years of age. This very contagious virus infects the lungs and breathing passage ways. Most people recover from an RSV infection in 1-2 weeks but for some (typically the very young and the elderly) serious health problems may occur. The peak RSV season is usually November to April.

HIGHLIGHTS OF FINDINGS FOR THE SEASON IN WASHOE COUNTY, NV

The first cases of RSV for Washoe County weren't reported until the first week of January, 2013, this is about 5 weeks later than usual (Figure 1). Even with the late start, the RSV season peaked during the last two weeks of February (weeks #7 between 2/10-16 & #8 between 2/17-



23), setting new weekly highs since 2006, with 58 cases reported for both weeks. As of the first week of March (week #10) 364 cases of RSV have been reported in Washoe County. The next highest season was in 2010 when 320 cases were reported for the entire 2009-10 season. The largest number of RSV cases are reported for those less than 5yrs old (98.5%), with the <1 yr olds making up 63.4% of that (Figure 2). RSV cases in Washoe County are reported by: hospitals (79%), private providers (20%), laboratories 5% and out-of-jurisdiction caregivers 1%. No RSV associated fatalities have been reported.

PROPHYLAXIS & TREATMENT

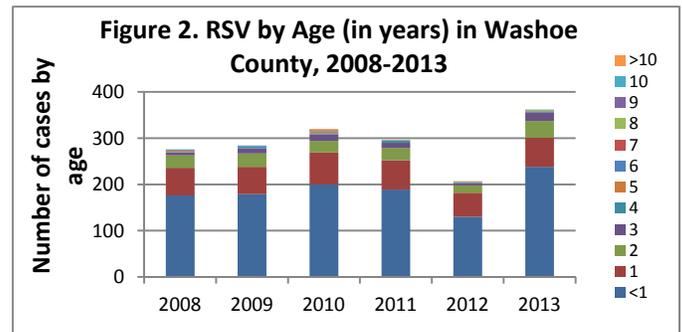
No vaccine or effective therapy is available for RSV. Fortunately, most cases of RSV are mild and require no specific treatment from doctors. Infants and children at risk for severe RSV infection can receive immunoprophylaxis with monthly doses of a humanized murine

anti-RSV monoclonal antibody during the RSV season¹ Because most coughs, congestion and fever are caused by viruses, doctors usually do not give antibiotics. A cough caused by a virus just needs to run its course and can last for as long as 2 weeks.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

RSV surveillance alerts public health officials and clinicians to times when respiratory infections might be attributed to RSV² and when patients at high risk for severe complications of infection might need RSV immunoprophylaxis.³ To prevent serious RSV-related respiratory disease, at-risk infants can be given a monthly injection of a medication consisting of RSV antibodies during peak RSV season (roughly November to April). Because its protection is short-lived, it has to be given in subsequent years until the child is no longer at high risk for severe RSV infection.

- ◆ **REPORTING** - Report cases of RSV to the Washoe County Health District by fax **775-328-3764** or call at **775-328-2447**. RSV is a reportable condition per Nevada law NAC 441A.



- ◆ **EDUCATION** - Educate your patients about the transmission of RSV and emphasize the importance of personal hygiene including hand washing, cough etiquette, and social distancing to prevent the spread of the disease.
- ◆ **DIAGNOSTIC TESTS** – When RSV is suspected, four tests are available to assist with diagnosis. They are: 1) Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Rapid Test; 2) The Respiratory DFA test (Direct Fluorescent Antibody); 3) The Viral Respiratory Culture; (4) PCR for Respiratory Virus Profile. All these tests are available at commercial labs such as LabCorp and Quest Diagnostics.

¹ <http://www.cdc.gov/Features/RSV/>

² http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6208a1.htm?s_cid=mm6208a1_e

³ <http://public.health.oregon.gov/Topics/Pages/Topics.aspx>