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Health Advisory

To: Healthcare Providers

From: David Canton, DO, MPH, JD, Health Officer Interim (signed original on file)

Date: December 2, 2021

Re: Increase in RSV in Butte County

Reports of respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) are increasing in Butte County across all age groups, including preschool aged children, young adults and the elderly. Due to this increase in activity, the Butte County Department of Public Health (BCPH) encourages broader testing for RSV among patients presenting with acute respiratory illness.

Background

RSV is the most common cause of bronchiolitis and pneumonia in infants and a cause of severe disease in adults older than age 65 years. In infants younger than six months, RSV infection may result in symptoms of irritability, poor feeding, lethargy, and/or apnea with or without fever. In older infants and young children, rhinorrhea and decreased appetite may appear one to three days before cough, often followed by sneezing, fever and sometimes wheezing. Symptoms in adults are typically consistent with upper respiratory tract infections, including rhinorrhea, pharyngitis, cough, headache, fatigue and fever. There is no specific treatment for RSV infection other than symptom management. Palivizumab prophylaxis has been shown to prevent severe RSV illness in infants and young children who are at high risk; further information about palivizumab is available from the [American Academy of Pediatrics](http://www.aap.org).

Recommendations

- Clinicians should be aware of the typical clinical presentation of RSV among different age groups.
- Clinicians should consider testing patients with a negative SARS-CoV-2 test and acute respiratory illness or the age-specific symptoms presented above for non-SARS-CoV-2 respiratory pathogens, such as RSV. Real-time reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction (rRT-PCR) is the preferred method for testing for respiratory viruses.
- Clinicians are encouraged to report clusters and suspected outbreaks of severe respiratory illness to the [Butte County Department of Public Health](http://buttecounty.net/publichealth).
- Administer prophylactic palivizumab to high-risk infants and young children per American Academy of Pediatrics guidance.
- Encourage parents and caregivers to keep young children with acute respiratory illnesses out of childcare, even if they have tested negative for SARS-CoV-2.
- Discourage health care personnel, childcare providers, and staff of long-term care facilities from working while acutely ill, even if they have tested negative for SARS-CoV-2.

If you have further questions about RSV or reporting, please contact the Butte County Public Health's Communicable Disease Program staff at (530) 552-3929.

Resources

- [CDC – RSV Information for Healthcare Providers](#)
- [CDC – RSV National Trends - NREVSS](#)
- [CDC – RSV Trends and Surveillance](#)
- [CDC – RSV Symptoms and Care](#)
- [Updated Guidance for Palivizumab Prophylaxis Among Infants and Young Children at Increased Risk of Hospitalization for Respiratory Syncytial Virus Infection | American Academy of Pediatrics \(aappublications.org\)](#)
- [Changes in Influenza and Other Respiratory Virus Activity During the COVID-19 Pandemic — United States, 2020–2021 | MMWR \(cdc.gov\)](#)

Under Title 17, California Code of Regulations (CCR), failure to report is a misdemeanor (Health and Safety Code § 120295) and is a citable offense under the Medical Board of California's Citation and Fine Program (Title 16, CCR, § 1364).

Categories of urgency levels:

Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention

Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action

Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action