

# Why RSV is so dangerous for older adults in Europe

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) causes seasonal respiratory disease that can pose a serious risk to older adults.<sup>1</sup> RSV is transmitted from an infected person through the air or via surfaces, for example when they cough or sneeze.<sup>2</sup>

Symptoms are similar to those of flu and include cold, cough and wheezing.<sup>1</sup> In serious cases, RSV can lead to pneumonia.<sup>3</sup>

Among older adults, RSV is associated with rates of serious illness and death at least as high as flu, especially in those with existing heart and lung conditions.<sup>4,5</sup>

In 2015, RSV was responsible for an estimated:<sup>5</sup>



1.5m

episodes among people over 65 years old in high-income countries



336,000

hospitalisations globally



38

in-hospital deaths per day globally

## RSV is especially dangerous for older people and people with existing health conditions



Before the COVID-19 pandemic, RSV accounted for **1 in 10** acute respiratory cases in adults.<sup>6</sup>



Older adults are at risk of **longer and more serious illness** from RSV than younger people.<sup>7</sup>



**70% of people in hospital** with RSV have one or more health conditions.<sup>8</sup> **Transplant patients** and adults with **cancer, COPD, heart failure or chronic kidney disease** are also at greater risk of severe RSV infection.<sup>9,10</sup>

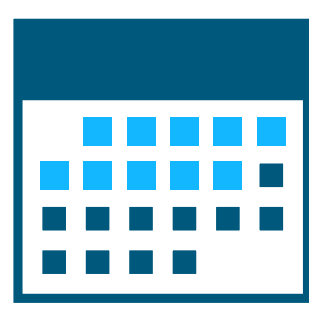


Almost **a third** of people aged 75 and over who are hospitalised with RSV **die within a year of admission**.<sup>11</sup>

## Managing RSV in older adults is costly



**RSV inpatient costs account for up to 64% of total costs of care** for older adults over a year due to the infection triggering other costly healthcare visits.<sup>8,11</sup>



An older person with serious RSV spends around **10 days in hospital**.<sup>12-13</sup> Up to **1 in 5** of these people require ventilation support.<sup>11</sup>



**Around 60% of people who are hospitalised require additional care** either at home or from nursing facilities or hospices.<sup>11</sup>

## Reducing the impact of RSV on older adults and health systems in Europe requires action in four areas<sup>14</sup>



Surveillance



Diagnosis



Infection prevention and control



Treatment



**A full policy report on the effect of RSV on older adults and health systems in Europe will be published in 2023.**

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