

Information sheet about passive immunisation against RSV with Beyfortus

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is a widespread respiratory virus. An RSV infection usually only causes mild symptoms, similar to that of a common cold. However, in infants, vulnerable children and older adults in particular, an RSV infection can cause serious illnesses, including bronchiolitis (infection of the small airways in the lungs) and pneumonia, which may result in a hospital stay or even death. In children, RSV infection is the most common reason for hospitalisation during the winter months. The virus normally occurs between October and March. Beyfortus is available as protection against RSV for newborn babies, infants and small children.

What is Beyfortus (active ingredient: nirsevimab)?

In contrast to a vaccination (active immunisation), where the antibodies need to be produced by the immune system, with Beyfortus pre-formed antibodies are administered (passive immunisation). These antibodies bind to specific points on the virus and prevent the virus from entering human cells and triggering illness symptoms.

Who should receive the passive immunisation?

According to Austria's vaccination plan, passive immunisation is generally recommended for newborns, infants and young children during their first RSV season, and is specifically recommended for high-risk children aged up to 24 months who are still vulnerable to a serious RSV infection during their second RSV season.

When should the passive immunisation take place?

Children who are born during the RSV season between 1 October and 31 March should receive the immunisation during their first week of life before being discharged from hospital. Children who are born outside the RSV season between 1 April and 30 September should receive the immunisation at a registered doctors' practice before their first RSV season.

How is the passive immunisation administered?

Beyfortus is administered as a single injection into the muscle. The injection is generally given in the outer thigh.

Is there a cost for the passive immunisation?

No. It is available for free as part of the free child vaccination programme run by the federal government, the federal Länder and the social insurance providers.

Are there some individuals who should not receive passive immunisation?

Passive immunisation should not be used if your child is allergic to nirsevimab or any of the other constituents of the medicinal product (refer to the patient information leaflet). Please discuss with your doctor whether or not your child can be given Beyfortus.

What are the potential adverse effects?

As with all medicinal products, this medicinal product may have adverse reactions, but not everyone gets them. Occasional adverse reactions (can affect up to 1 in 100 people treated) may be:

- a rash (0.7%) within 14 days of use
- a reaction at the injection site (0.6%), such as redness, swelling and pain
- fever (0.4%)

This information sheet does not replace the patient information leaflet or an informed consent consultation. Should you have any further questions about this medicinal product, please get in touch with your doctor.