Date

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Your child may have recently been exposed to **Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV).** RSV is a virus that causes many cases of the common cold as well as other respiratory infections, like pneumonia. RSV is a common infection in children and adults. It is most often seen in the winter and early spring but can occur anytime.

**What are the symptoms of RSV?**

For most children, symptoms appear like a cold. Very young infants may experience irritability, poor feeding, lethargy, or cyanosis (i.e., turn blue with cough or brief periods of no breathing). Some other respiratory problems include bronchiolitis with wheezing, or pneumonia. Children with weakened immune systems, prematurity, or heart or lung problems get sicker when ill with this infection.

**How is RSV spread?**

Before signs or symptoms appear, the infected person is contagious. It may take from 2–8 days for symptoms to develop. The virus is spread by close contact with mouth or nose secretions. The virus may live on surfaces for many hours and 30 minutes or more on hands.

**How is RSV diagnosed and treated?**

A healthcare provider can identify RSV by sending a nose swab for testing. When there are large outbreaks in the community, a healthcare provider may make a diagnosis based on symptoms.

**How do you control the spread?**

* Wash hands frequently and thoroughly.
* Teach children to cover their noses and mouths with a tissue or their arm when coughing or sneezing.
* When using a tissue, wash hands well afterwards. Dispose of dirty tissues each use.
* Ventilate the home daily.
* Sanitize dirty surfaces.
* Exclusion of children with RSV from school and childcare is generally not necessary.
* If the child is too sick to take part in normal activities, they should be kept at home.

**How do I get more information?**

For more information about RSV, contact your healthcare provider.