



# NEWS RELEASE

## Public Health

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## County confirms RSV-associated death of a child

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The San Bernardino County Department of Public Health has confirmed the county’s first respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)-associated death of a child under the age of 5 in December 2023. The child, a resident of San Bernardino County who was severely immunocompromised, passed away at a Los Angeles County hospital.

RSV is a common respiratory virus that often causes colds but can be severe for infants and older adults. It can spread when someone with the virus sneezes or coughs, through close contact with someone who is sick, or by touching infected surfaces and then touching your face without first washing your hands. People with RSV infection typically have fever, cough, runny nose, wheezing—and in very young infants—increased irritability and difficulty breathing.

“The loss of this young child underscores the importance of heightened awareness and protective measures, especially for vulnerable populations including older adults, pregnant people, and infants,” states Dr. Michael Sequeira, San Bernardino County’s Health Officer.

To safeguard against RSV and protect vulnerable individuals, the public is urged to take the following precautions:

- **Frequent handwashing:** Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after being around sick individuals or in crowded places.
- **Avoid close contact:** Limit close contact with sick individuals, particularly infants and those with compromised immune systems. Stay home if you are sick.
- **Practice respiratory hygiene:** Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or elbow and dispose of tissues in the trash immediately.
- **Sanitize surfaces:** Regularly clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces, such as toys, doorknobs, and countertops.
- **Get vaccinated:** Vaccines are available to older adults, pregnant people, and infants. Talk with your healthcare provider to learn more about the vaccine.

For more information and resources, please visit the [CDPH RSV website](#).