

# ISMP Canada Safety Bulletin

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## RSV Immunization: Right Product for the Right Patient

ISMP Canada has analyzed several reports\* describing administration of an incorrect respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) immunizing agent to patients. These reports have described infants receiving an adult vaccine, pregnant persons receiving the incorrect adult vaccine, and mix-ups with other vaccines. Key contributing factors included lack of familiarity with the numerous new RSV immunizing agents (Table 1), poor design of vaccine storage areas, and lack of labelling of pre-drawn syringes. Learning is shared here to inform continuous improvement activities that support safe administration of the right product to the right patient.

**TABLE 1.** Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Immunizing Agents Marketed in Canada

Immunizing Agent (Manufacturer)	Target Patient Group	Recommended Intramuscular (IM) Dose
<b>Abrysvo</b> <sup>1</sup> (Pfizer)	Vaccine for pregnant persons at 32–36 weeks of gestation	0.5 mL IM (after reconstitution)
	Vaccine for adults 60 years and older	0.5 mL IM (after reconstitution)
<b>Arexvy</b> <sup>2</sup> (GlaxoSmithKline)	Vaccine for adults 60 years and older, as well as adults 50–59 years of age who are at higher risk for RSV disease	0.5 mL IM (after reconstitution)
<b>Beyfortus</b> <sup>3</sup> (Sanofi Pasteur)	Monoclonal antibody for neonates and infants during their first RSV season	Less than 5 kg weight: 50 mg IM 5 kg weight or greater: 100 mg IM
	Monoclonal antibody for children up to 24 months of age who are vulnerable to severe RSV disease	200 mg (2 × 100 mg IM injections)

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Incorporate distinguishing features of each product in the electronic drug file (e.g., Beyfortus – monoclonal antibody – pediatric use up to 24 months of age) to support correct selection in electronic drop-down menus.
- Optimize storage areas<sup>4</sup> to enable distinction among various products (e.g., use a separate shelf for the pediatric product). Display a quick reference guide in the storage area to support correct product selection.

\* The reports were submitted to the Individual Practitioner Reporting database and National Incident Data Repository for Community Pharmacies, components of the Canadian Medication Incident Reporting and Prevention System (CMIRPS). More information about the databases is available from: <http://www.cmirps-scdpim.ca/?p=12>.

- Before administration, ask the patient and/or caregiver to confirm the expected immunization.<sup>4</sup> Verbalize the product name and indication for the immunization (e.g., Abrysvo to prevent RSV infection in pregnant individuals) and consider showing the vial or labelled syringe to the patient as a second check.
- Administer the immunizing agent immediately after preparation. If this is not possible, label each pre-drawn syringe<sup>5</sup> according to jurisdictional regulations (e.g., product name, dose/volume, beyond-use date,<sup>4</sup> and patient name).

## REFERENCES

1. Abrysvo [product monograph]. Kirkland (QC): Pfizer Canada ULC; 2023 Dec 21.
2. Arexvy [product monograph]. Mississauga (ON): GlaxoSmithKline Inc.; 2023 Aug 4 (rev 2024 Nov 1).
3. Beyfortus [product monograph]. Toronto (ON): Sanofi Pasteur Limited; 2023 Apr 19 (rev 2024 Jun 14).
4. Updated analysis and shared learning from COVID-19 vaccine errors. ISMP Can Saf Bull. 2021 [cited 2024 Dec 31];21(8):1-4. Available from: <https://ismpcanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/ISMPCSB2021-i8-Vaccine-Errors.pdf>
5. Vaccine administration practices: Canadian immunization guide. Ottawa (ON): Health Canada; 2017 Nov [cited 2025 Jan 31]. Available from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/canadian-immunization-guide-part-1-key-immunization-information/page-8-vaccine-administration-practices.html#t2>



The Canadian Medication Incident Reporting and Prevention System (CMIRPS) is a collaborative pan-Canadian program of Health Canada, the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI), the Institute for Safe Medication Practices Canada (ISMP Canada) and Healthcare Excellence Canada (HEC). The goal of CMIRPS is to reduce and prevent harmful medication incidents in Canada.

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(Including near misses)

**Online:** [www.ismpcanada.ca/report/](http://www.ismpcanada.ca/report/)

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