

Palivizumab (Synagis®)

Synagis® (SIN a jiss) is an important medicine that is used to lessen the chance of your child getting a serious viral lung infection called RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus). RSV is a respiratory virus that can cause very serious pneumonia in children at risk. Synagis only helps to prevent **serious** RSV infections. It is still possible for your child to get an RSV infection, even if he or she receives Synagis, but getting Synagis decreases the chance that your child will need to be hospitalized with RSV.

Who May be Given This Medicine

Generally young children **under the age of two years** who:

- were born early at 34 weeks gestation or less (depending on their age)
- still need treatment for BPD (bronchopulmonary dysplasia) or have some other types of lung problems
- have certain types of congenital heart problems
- have certain neuromuscular or airway problems

How This Medication is Given

- Synagis is given as an injection (shot), usually into the muscle in the top part of the leg.
- This medicine is given once a month during “RSV season.” This is usually the 5 months from November through March. The dose depends on your child’s weight so he or she will be weighed before the dose is given each time.
- Synagis is usually given at the doctor’s office or at home by a nurse.

If You Miss an Appointment

- If you miss the appointment when the shot is to be given, contact your child’s doctor or home care nurse as soon as possible to reschedule the appointment (Picture 1).
- It is **very important** your child receives Synagis doses **on time each month** (every 28 to 31 days). If your child is ill at the time the injection is due, please tell the nurse who gives the shot. Depending on your child’s condition, we may decide **NOT** to give Synagis that day. In that case, schedule another appointment as soon as possible.



Picture 1 It is very important to have the shot every month on schedule.

Possible Side Effects:

- Redness, swelling, warmth or discomfort at the injection site
- Fever, cold-like symptoms, ear infection or runny nose
- Mild rash
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Allergic reactions are rare but possible. Your child will be observed for 20 to 30 minutes after his first injection to look for any reactions. Call for emergency assistance (911) if you see any of the following after a Synagis injection:
 - Rapid breathing or difficulty breathing
 - Bluish color of the skin or nails
 - Severe rash or hives
 - Swelling of the mouth or face or difficulty swallowing

Who Makes the Arrangements for Synagis

- Normally the primary care doctor makes the arrangements for Synagis to be given either at home or in the office.
- The doctor will send a referral to a specialty pharmacy (or home care company). He or she will obtain the insurance approval, and then the medicine will be sent to either your home or the doctor's office. If the doctor wants Synagis given at home, a home care nurse will call you to make an appointment to come to your house.

If Your Child Gets This Medicine at Home

- Be sure to keep a record of when the medicine is given.
- The doctor has prescribed this medicine for **your child only**. Do not give it to anyone else.
- If you are storing this medicine at home, it must be kept in the refrigerator.

Insurance Coverage

Since Synagis is an expensive medicine, some insurance plans do not cover it, even though your doctor thinks your child may qualify. Check with your insurance company or your child's doctor's office if you have questions about this.

If you have any questions, be sure to ask your child's doctor, nurse or pharmacist.