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## Palivizumab Prophylaxis Recommendations — Alaska, 2012–13 RSV Season

### Background

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is the most common cause of bronchiolitis and pneumonia in infants in the United States. Most children are infected with RSV during their first year of life; virtually all are infected at least once by their second birthday. Up to 3% of infants are hospitalized with RSV. The hospitalization rate is higher for certain risk groups, such as premature infants and infants with chronic lung disease or congenital heart disease, and Alaska Native children in Western Alaska.<sup>1,2</sup>

Palivizumab (Synagis®) is a monoclonal antibody that reduces the risk of respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) hospitalization in certain high-risk children.<sup>1,3</sup> The American Academy of Pediatrics has established eligibility criteria for palivizumab prophylaxis in high-risk children (Table 1).<sup>1,2</sup> In most areas of the United States, initiation of monthly palivizumab in November and continuation for up to five monthly doses is recommended for qualifying children.<sup>1,3</sup>

**Table 1. Eligibility Criteria for Palivizumab Prophylaxis**

Child's Age	Gestational Age	Health or Social Conditions
<24 months	Any	Chronic lung disease or hemodynamically significant cardiac disease
<12 months	Any	Congenital airway anomalies or neuromuscular disease
<12 months	<29 weeks	
<6 months	29 to <32 weeks	
<3 months	32 to <35 weeks	Attend daycare or have at least one sibling aged <5 years

### Alaska RSV Seasonality

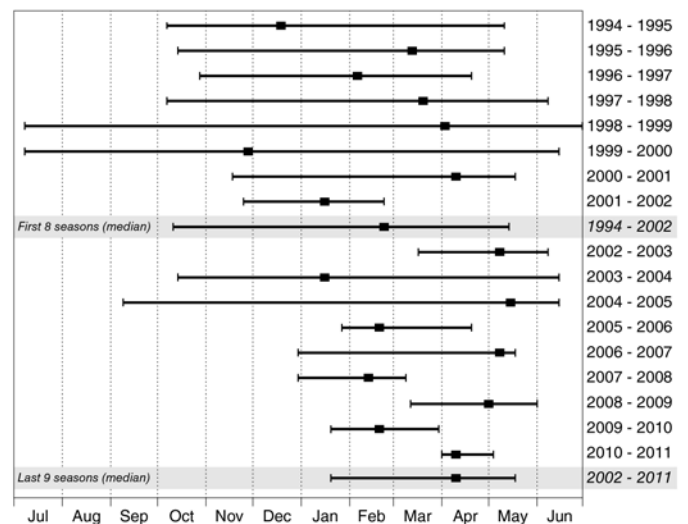
In Alaska, the RSV season is defined as the first and last 2 consecutive weeks during which RSV was laboratory-confirmed in  $\geq 2$  specimens and  $>10\%$  of submitted specimens.<sup>4</sup> RSV direct fluorescent antibody testing is performed by Alaska State Virology Laboratory on respiratory specimens collected from children aged  $<2$  years, and when RSV testing is specifically requested. During 2011–12, RSV detection occurred during October–June, peaking in February–March (Figure 1). The RSV season can vary by year. YK Delta Regional Hospital (YKDRH) data indicate that the median RSV season duration decreased from 30.5 weeks during 1994–2002 to 12 weeks during 2002–2011 (Figure 2). Seasonality also varies by region. During 2011–12, the RSV season onset was November 6–12 at the Alaska Native Medical Center, November 20–26 at YKDRH and Providence Hospital, and January 8–15 at Kakanak Hospital.

### Alaska Medicaid Palivizumab Reimbursement Criteria

During the 2011–12 RSV season, Alaska Medicaid palivizumab reimbursement occurred from November 28 through May 14.<sup>3</sup> This period closely matched Alaska's 2011–12 RSV activity. Alaska Medicaid will retain the same palivizumab reimbursement season (November 28 through May 14) during 2012–13 unless the 2012–13 RSV season starts prior to November 28, in which case, Medicaid will

adjust the coverage dates accordingly. Medicaid will pay for up to three or six monthly doses of palivizumab for children meeting specified criteria (Table 2).

**Figure 2. RSV Season Onset and Offset for each RSV Season — YK Delta, 1994–95 through 2010–11**



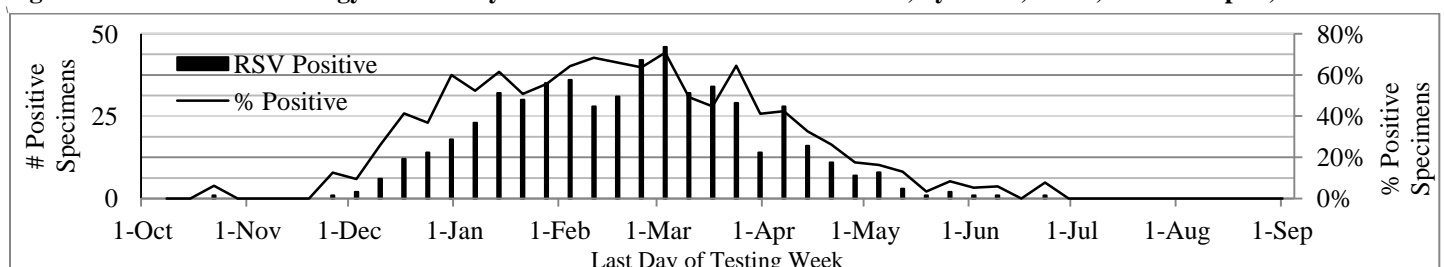
**Table 2. Alaska Medicaid Palivizumab Coverage for the 2012–13 RSV Season**

Date of Birth	GA (Weeks)	Risk Factors	# of Doses
Born after Aug 28, 2012 (<3 months)	32 to <35	At least one: • daycare attendance • sibling aged <5 years • home without running water <sup>4</sup> • home with $\geq 3$ people in child's bedroom or $\geq 7$ per household	Up to 3
Born after May 28, 2012 (<6 months)	29 to <32		Up to 6
Born after Nov 28, 2011 (<12 months)	<29		Up to 6
Born after Nov 28, 2011 (<12 months)	Any	• congenital airway anomaly • neuromuscular disease	Up to 6
Born after Nov 28, 2010 ( $\leq 24$ months)	Any	• congenital heart disease • chronic lung disease	Up to 6

### References

- Committee on Infectious Diseases. From the American Academy of Pediatrics: Policy Statements--Modified recommendations for use of palivizumab for prevention of respiratory syncytial virus infections *Pediatrics* 2009;124(6):1696-1701. Available at: <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/124/6/1694.full.html>
- Singleton RJ, Bruden D, Bulkow LR. Respiratory syncytial virus season and hospitalizations in the Alaskan Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta. *Pediatr Infect Dis J* 2007;26:S46-S50.
- American Academy of Pediatrics. *Red Book: 2012 Report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases*. Pickering LK, ed. 29th ed. Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics; 2012.
- Alaska Section of Epidemiology. Update on RSV Seasonality and Palivizumab Prophylaxis in Alaska. *Bulletin* No. 23, Aug 31, 2011. Available at: [http://www.epi.alaska.gov/bulletins/docs/b2011\\_23.pdf](http://www.epi.alaska.gov/bulletins/docs/b2011_23.pdf)

**Figure 1. Alaska State Virology Laboratory RSV Positives and Percent Positive, by Week, Oct 1, 2011 to Sept 1, 2012**



(Contributed by: Dr. Rosalyn Singleton, CDC, ANTHC and Dr. Alex Malter, Alaska Division of Health Care Services.)