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NFID urges action to reduce burden of respiratory syncytial virus

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The National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID) has issued a Call to Action urging stronger public health focus and increased awareness of respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) in the United States.

The report, Call to Action: Reducing the Burden of RSV across the Lifespan, addresses the underappreciated impact of RSV and outlines key strategic priorities to drive progress in RSV surveillance, diagnosis, prevention, and treatment.

RSV is a common respiratory illness that can pose a serious public health threat for all age groups. While RSV is usually associated with mild, cold-like symptoms, it can be serious and can lead to severe illness, even in otherwise healthy people.

Each year in the US, RSV is estimated to cause approximately 58,000 hospitalisations and an estimated 100 to 500 deaths among children younger than age five years. RSV is also increasingly recognized as a significant cause of respiratory illness in adults age 65 years and older, with an estimated 177,000 hospitalizations and 14,000 deaths annually in the US.

The NFID Call to Action highlights the understated burden of RSV across the lifespan and includes strategies to address gaps in diagnostic testing and surveillance, existing health disparities, lack of currently available treatment and prevention options, and the potential impact of new interventions on the horizon after decades of limited innovation.