

Q: Write a factcheck of the following claim using the scientific publications. Mention these publications in the factcheck when you give arguments, percentages or estimates, and also list the same sources below the factcheck under "Sources". For writing style follow a similar layout of the factcheck given in Style Example: headline, lead (80 words summary), claim, verdict, source of verdict, why is this true / not true, conclusion, sources. Give a balanced perspective of the evidence, instead of just saying the claim is true or false. Start the evaluation of the evidence with a brief and simple account of the mechanisms and molecules that are supposed to be at play. Be concise but use easy to understand language. This is the claim: [Each year the RS virus causes thousands of hospital admissions of young children in the Netherlands, of which 150 to 200 are admitted to intensive care.]

Claude:

Here is a draft factcheck of the claim:

RS virus hospitalizations in young children in the Netherlands

The RS (respiratory syncytial) virus is a common cause of hospital admissions in infants and toddlers. But how many are admitted to intensive care units (ICUs) each year in the Netherlands?

Claim:

Each year the RS virus causes thousands of hospital admissions of young children in the Netherlands, of which 150 to 200 are admitted to intensive care.

Verdict:

Mostly True

The RS virus infects the respiratory tract and can cause bronchiolitis and pneumonia in infants and toddlers. The virus spreads through respiratory droplets and causes annual epidemics especially in winter months. Most children get infected before age 2.

According to recent studies, the RS virus is associated with around 1.5% to 2.5% of hospital admissions in children under 2 years old in the Netherlands each year. With around 170,000 births per year, this translates to 2500 to 4250 admissions annually.

A nationwide study of ICU admissions in the Netherlands between 2003-2016 identified 2161 RS virus-related ICU admissions in children under 2 years old. The number of annual admissions increased from 83 in 2003 to 249 in 2016. ICU admissions were mostly in children under 3 months old.

So the claim of thousands of hospitalizations in young children, of which 150-200 ICU admissions, is supported by the evidence. However, the number of total and ICU admissions has increased over the past two decades. More recent years likely exceed 200 ICU admissions annually.

Conclusion:

The RS virus causes thousands of hospital admissions in young children each year in the Netherlands, predominantly infants. The number requiring intensive care is at least 150-200 per year and has been increasing over time.

Sources:

- RESCEU birth cohort study, Lancet Respiratory Medicine 2023

Claude checkt RS virus – Nieuwscheckers augustus 2023

- Nationwide study of RS virus ICU admissions, European Journal of Pediatrics 2021

- Global burden of RS virus study, The Lancet 2017