m DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Health Advisory: COVID-19 Therapeutics in Minnesota

Minnesota Department of Health, Wed, Apr 6 11:00 CDT 2022

Action Steps

Local and tribal health department: Please forward to hospitals, clinics, urgent care centers, emergency departments, pharmacies, and convenience clinics in your jurisdiction.

Hospitals, clinics and other facilities: Please forward to occupational health and employee health leadership, infection preventionists, infectious disease physicians, emergency department staff, hospitalists, primary care clinicians, and all other health care providers who might see patients with COVID-19.

Health care providers:

- Consider early treatment for mild to moderate COVID-19 in eligible patients, based on guidance from the National Institutes of Health.
- Encourage patients with high-risk conditions to test early after onset of symptoms and seek treatment as soon as possible if positive.
- Refer to the MDH webpage Where to Access Oral Antiviral Therapy in Minnesota (https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/medsaccess.html) for information on referring patients to locations where oral antiviral therapy is available (including Test to Treat locations) and information on where prescriptions for oral antivirals may be filled.
- Continue to offer vaccination to all patients who are eligible (5 years and older) for the primary series and as indicated for an additional dose or booster dose, including those aged 50 and older.

Background

While vaccination continues to provide the best protection against COVID-19, several treatment options are now available to treat eligible patients with acute infection. There are two oral antiviral medications that have been authorized for use – Pfizer's Paxlovid and Merck's Lagevrio (molnupiravir) – as well as two intravenous options, outpatient remdesivir and bebtelovimab (a monoclonal antibody). Paxlovid and bebtelovimab are authorized for adult and pediatric patients aged 12 and older and weighing at least 40kg, while molnupiravir is authorized for adult patients aged 18 and older. Remdesivir is FDA-approved for use in patients 12 and older and is authorized for use in patients younger than 12 weighing at least 3.5kg. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) distributes oral antivirals and monoclonal antibodies to states and territories on a weekly basis. Remdesivir is available commercially and is not being distributed by HHS. Patients who are at high risk for progression to severe COVID-19, including hospitalization or death, are eligible for treatment (for a list of risk factors, see the CDC webpage Underlying Medical Conditions Associated with Higher Risk for Severe COVID-19 (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/clinical-care/underlyingconditions.html). Treatment should be initiated as early as possible, within 5-7 days from onset of symptoms.

Supplies of both oral antivirals have steadily increased since December 2021 and are now available in a wide variety of locations, including clinics, hospitals, and retail pharmacies such as CVS and Thrifty White. In March, HHS began distributing oral antivirals directly to participating Test to Treat pharmacy-based clinics and federally qualified health centers (FQHCs). HHS also launched a program for long-term care pharmacies to directly order these antivirals to facilitate increased access for eligible long-term care residents.

Therapies Recommended for High-Risk, Non-Hospitalized Adults with Mild to Moderate COVID-19

National Institutes of Health COVID-19 Treatment Guidelines: Therapeutic Management of Non-Hospitalized Adults with COVID-19
Preferred therapies for patients with mild to moderate COVID-19 who are at risk of progressing to severe illness are (in order of preference):

- Paxlovid 300mg/100mg orally twice daily for 5 days initiated within 5 days of symptom onset
- Remdesivir* 200mg IV on day 1, followed by 100mg IV days 2 and 3, initiated within 7 days of symptom onset

Alternative therapies if none of the above are available or clinically appropriate (in alphabetical order):

- Bebtelovimab 175mg IV x 1 infusion, initiated within 7 days of symptom onset
- Molnupiravir 800mg orally twice daily for 5 days, initiated within 5 days of symptom onset

*May not be available at all health care locations.

Providers should refer to the FDA fact sheets for each therapeutic (available at MDH: Therapeutic Options for COVID-19 Patients (https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/therapeutic.html) and MDH: Clinical Considerations for Prescribing Oral Antivirals (https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/oralantivirals.html) for a checklist of eligibility criteria to consider when prescribing oral antivirals.

Where to Access Oral Antiviral Therapy in Minnesota

MDH has created a list of health systems and facilities and retail pharmacies where oral antivirals are available. This list is available on the MDH: COVID-19 Medication Options (https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/meds.html) page and will be updated on a regular basis as new sites are added. Retail pharmacies with oral antiviral supplies currently include CVS, Coborn's, Thrifty White, and several independent pharmacies. New pharmacy locations such as Walmart, Hy-Vee and Cub are also in line to be added. The list also includes locations of participants in the federally managed Test to Treat program, which includes pharmacy-based clinics (such as CVS Minute Clinics) and federally qualified health centers (FQHCs). These locations are listed in the COVID-19 Test to Treat Locator. Patients can get tested at Test to Treat sites or bring test results from a home testing kit or other testing location for evaluation. If positive and therapy is appropriate for them, they can get a prescription from a health care provider and have the prescription filled in one location. Providers can also find locations where prescriptions can be filled using this tool.

Minnesota Resource Allocation Platform (MNRAP)

As of April 4, 2022, the public or their caregivers are not able to submit their information directly to MNRAP for referral for monoclonal antibody therapy. As new COVID-19 treatments have become available, and as the pandemic has evolved, there is now a need for providers to do a more detailed assessment before choosing a treatment option, such as reviewing medications or lab work. Providers with patients who are eligible for a monoclonal antibody (currently bebtelovimab only authorized) may

access the MNRAP referral tool at MDH: Therapeutic Options for COVID-19 Patients (https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/therapeutic.html).

For More Information

- MDH: COVID-19 Medication Options (https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/meds.html)
    - Information for patients on COVID-19 treatment options and where to access treatment.
- MDH: Therapeutic Options for COVID-19 Patients (https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/therapeutic.html)
    - Information for providers on COVID-19 treatment options, including clinical guidance for use of oral antivirals and monoclonal antibodies, clinical considerations for prescribing oral antivirals, updates on variants and treatment efficacy, and links to FDA provider fact sheets for each authorized therapy.
- Where to Access Oral Antiviral Therapy in Minnesota (https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/medsaccess.html)
- COVID-19 Test to Treat Locator
- COVID-19 Test to Treat Fact Sheet
- National Institutes of Health COVID-19 Treatment Guidelines
- Call MDH at 651-201-5414 or 877-676-5414

A copy of this HAN is available at: MDH Health Alert Network (http://www.health.state.mn.us/han)
The content of this message is intended for public health and health care personnel and response partners who have a need to know the information to perform their duties.