

COVID-19 Treatments

There are medicines to help treat COVID-19 disease. Be an advocate for yourself and your family members. Ask your health care provider early on if you or someone you love becomes sick with COVID-19 disease.

What medications/therapies are available to treat COVID-19 disease for people who are not sick enough to be in the hospital?

If you have [symptoms](#) of COVID-19 disease, your health care provider may recommend specific therapies/remedies to help relieve symptoms or to support your body's immune system.

These include:

- Medications to reduce fever (such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen).
- Staying hydrated—drinking water or, if necessary, receiving intravenous fluids at a health care facility.
- Getting plenty of rest to help the body fight the virus.

If you are at [higher risk](#)* for increased illness or complications from COVID-19 due to a medical condition or other reason and test positive, your health care provider may recommend one of the following treatments to reduce your chances of hospitalization or death:

- [Monoclonal antibody treatments](#)
- [Oral \(by mouth\) antiviral medicines](#)

Which of these medicines are currently available to treat COVID-19 disease at Test to Treat sites?



Qualified health care providers at the Test to Treat site may prescribe either:

- Paxlovid (oral tablet, antiviral) (Pfizer)—for adults and adolescents 12 years and older.

- Molnupiravir or Lagevrio (oral tablet, antiviral) (Merck)—for adults only.

Your regular health care provider can also prescribe one of these medications for you. As scientists learn more, guidance may change. Stay informed of [NIH guidelines](#).

How do these antiviral medicines (Paxlovid and Molnupiravir) work?

- These medicines work by treating mild to moderate COVID-19 disease so that you do not get sicker and end up in the hospital.
- These medicines either stop one of the proteins in the COVID-19 virus from replicating (making copies of itself) or attack the COVID-19 virus.
- The medicines are more likely to work if you take them as soon as possible after being diagnosed with COVID-19 and within the first five days of developing symptoms. **Don't delay.**
- They are not vaccines. They do not prevent COVID-19 disease as vaccines do.
- If you are prescribed Paxlovid and complete the treatment but become ill again a week or two later, contact a health care provider immediately. Some people have been found to have a rebound illness after Paxlovid (they initially got better and then got sick again).

See fact sheets on [Paxlovid](#) and [Molnupiravir](#).

Are there people who should not take these antiviral medicines (Paxlovid and Molnupiravir)?

- People who are allergic to the medicine or its ingredients should not take these antiviral medicines.
- There are no studies using Paxlovid in pregnant people. If you are pregnant, you should talk with your doctor before starting this medicine.
- Lagevrio (Molnupiravir) is not recommended for use in pregnant people, as it may affect the unborn baby.
- Paxlovid may interact with certain other medications, and this may cause a bad reaction. Always inform your health care provider of any medical conditions you have and any medicines you are taking (including herbal and over-the-counter medications) before taking Paxlovid. Your health care provider will then carefully review to ensure you can safely take Paxlovid.
- People with chronic medical conditions—including kidney or liver disease, hepatitis, or HIV—should check with their health care provider to see if they may take Paxlovid.

What about people who are hospitalized with COVID-19 illness—are there medications to treat them?

Yes, other medications are available for people who are hospitalized due to COVID-19 illness. Be an advocate for yourself and your family members. Ask your health care team!

*This includes those with risk factors such as obesity, diabetes, heart disease, weakened immune systems (for example: due to cancer treatment, HIV/AIDs, immune disorders), advanced age, asthma, sickle cell disease, or complex medical conditions, and pregnant/recently pregnant people.