

Update on COVID-19 antivirals

Considerations for oral antiviral use by GPs in primary care assessment and covid model of care

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Available treatments of COVID-19 in Victoria

The medications currently available are:

- Sotrovimab
- Remdesivir
- Ronapreve (casirivimab + imdevimab)
- Paxlovid (nirmatrelvir + ritonavir)
- Lagevrio (Molnupiravir)

These treatments are for use in the early stages of COVID-19, before severe disease has developed and within 5 or 7 days of infection.

General criteria for treatment of COVID-19

Criteria for use:

- Confirmed SARS-CoV2
- < 5 or 7 days from onset of symptoms
- No oxygen requirement
- Either unvaccinated or partially vaccinated with risk factors

or

Immunosuppressed (irrespective of vaccination status)

Plus at least one additional risk factor

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Oral Antivirals

Both Paxlovid (nirmatrelvir + ritonavir) and Lagevrio (Molnupiravir) were approved for use in Australia last month.

	Paxlovid	Lagevrio
Dosage:	300mg (2 x 150 mg tablets) Nirmatrelvir and 100mg (1 x 100mg tablet) ritonavir every 12 hours for 5 days. Should not be crushed.	800mg (4 x 200mg capsules taken orally every 12 hours for 5 days. Tablets can be crushed
Contraindications:	Significant drug-drug interaction potential – a thorough review of interactions required prior to prescribing	None currently identified.
Not recommended for:	Pregnant or breastfeeding women, and people under 18 years	Pregnant or breastfeeding women, and people under 18 years
Distribution:	In health setting via request forms to central pharmacy at Alfred Health	Listed on PBS, as well as RACF receiving stock onsite

Usage data

COVID medications usage as at 11 March 2022:

Medications	Total use in Victoria
Remdesivir	3470
Sotrovimab	6217
Ronapreve	461
Paxlovid (Nirmatrelvir + Ritonavir)	44
Lagevrio (Molnupiravir)	8

Updates to guidance

Recent changes to guidance in Victoria have included:

- Extending eligibility for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders from 35 years and above as opposed to 65 and above
- Fully vaccinated refers to 3 doses of the vaccine
- Prioritisation matrix and guiding principles for medication published in February on DH website. **To be updated this week in line with updated National guidance.

Access to medications: Pathways to refer or prescribe COVID medications

- Refer to health services in the patient's catchment area with dedicated COVID clinics
- See the department web page <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/sotrovimab-factsheet-for-clinicians-word> for updated contact details
- Some health services have online referral forms on their website (such as Monash Health)
- As Lagevrio (Molnupiravir) is now on the PBS, a prescription at a local pharmacy from a GP (For isolating patients with confirmed cases, telehealth is recommended) can be given to eligible patients
- Majority of Lagevrio scripts from GPs will most likely be for aged care residents (stock located onsite).

Considerations

- Supply constraints
- Impacts of new variants on efficacy of these medications
- Local case numbers
- Prioritised cohorts
- Contraindications
- Individual risk factors

Emerging therapies

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- For pre-exposure prophylaxis
- Dosage: 2 injections (150 mg of tixagevimab and 150 mg of cilgavimab) administered as separate sequential intramuscular injections at different injection sites, one in each gluteal muscle.
- Limited stock arrived into Australia last week
- National guidelines recommend for exceptional use in severely immunocompromised patients only.

Resources

- Advice for health care workers on Victorian Department of Health webpage – updated regularly <https://www.health.vic.gov.au/covid-19/vaccines-and-medications-in-patients-with-covid-19>
- National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce guidelines <https://covid19evidence.net.au/>