

# New antibody drug therapy to treat COVID-19



## What is monoclonal antibody therapy?

When you have a virus, your immune system creates antibodies to help fight off the virus. Monoclonal antibody drug therapy contains man-made antibodies that are similar (clones) to the antibodies your immune system makes. Monoclonal antibody drug therapy is investigational medicine for patients who have tested positive for COVID-19 and meet certain criteria.

## Who may be eligible for this treatment option?

Patients who test positive for COVID-19, have mild to moderate symptoms and are not hospitalized or requiring new oxygen therapy or an increase in oxygen therapy due to COVID-19 may be eligible for this treatment option. Patients must be 12 years of age or older, weigh at least 88 pounds (40 kg) and be at high risk for developing severe COVID-19 and/or needing hospitalization. It must be administered within 10 days of the first symptoms of COVID-19.

## Who is at high risk?

- Individuals ages 12 years and older and who:
  - have obesity, with a body mass index (BMI) of 35 or higher.
  - have diabetes, chronic kidney disease, or a condition that weakens your immune system.
  - take a medicine that weakens your immune system.
- Individuals 65 years and older.
- Individuals 55 years and who:
  - have heart disease.
  - have high blood pressure.
  - have long-term lung disease.
- Individuals ages 12 to 17 years who:
  - have obesity, with a BMI higher than 85 percent of patients your same age or gender.
  - have heart disease, sickle cell disease, or a long-term lung disease.
  - have a developmental condition, like cerebral palsy.
  - regularly use medical technology, like a ventilator or feeding tube.

## Is antibody therapy a vaccine?

Both antibody therapy and vaccines can help offer protection from COVID-19, but they are different.

**Antibody therapy** can help a patient who is sick with COVID-19 fight off the infection. A **vaccine** offers protection from future viruses but cannot treat a patient who is already sick.

## How is antibody therapy given to a patient?

Antibody therapy is given through a vein (intravenous or IV) in one dose for at least 1 hour. The total appointment takes about 3 hours.

## Are these COVID-19 antibody drugs approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)?

In November 2020, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) authorized the emergency use of these antibody drug therapies only during the COVID-19 pandemic. This authorization is different than FDA approval.

These drugs are investigational and still being studied, so there is limited information known at this time about their safety and effectiveness.

## What are names of antibody therapy drugs?

Some names for antibody drugs may include bamlanivimab or casirivimab plus imdevimab.

## Who should I contact if I'm interested in receiving a COVID-19 antibody drug therapy?

If you are interested in receiving this therapy, you can call UW Health's COVID-19 antibody hotline at **(608) 720-3319**.

Due to the limited supply, we may not be able to treat all patients that meet the criteria. A randomized process will be utilized to determine who receives it.

More information about COVID-19 antibody therapy can be found at [uwhealth.org/antibody](https://www.uwhealth.org/antibody)