

# WHAT MEDICINES WORK TO TREAT COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019)?

## Remdesivir

There is currently only **one** medicine fully approved by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) to treat COVID-19 (coronavirus).

- The FDA has approved remdesivir (Veklury®) to treat COVID-19.
- Remdesivir is an antiviral drug.
- Remdesivir is approved to be used in adults and children 12 years and older that weigh at least 40 kg (88 lbs.) or more.
- Remdesivir may be used for patients that **are hospitalized with COVID-19.**
- Remdesivir is given via an IV infusion.

## Dexamethasone

The steroid (corticosteroid) medicine, dexamethasone is a medicine that the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) has recommended for certain **patients that are hospitalized with COVID-19 and are on a mechanical ventilator (machine that breathes for patients) or need oxygen.**

- Dexamethasone is a corticosteroid, or steroid for short. Corticosteroids help to reduce inflammation in the body.
- Other corticosteroids may be used if dexamethasone is not available.
- Dexamethasone is being studied to see if it can help or prevent organ dysfunction and lung injury from inflammation.
- Studies have shown that dexamethasone reduces the risk for deaths by about 30% for patients on mechanical ventilators.
- Studies have shown that dexamethasone reduces the risk for deaths by about 20% for patients that needed oxygen.
- In some cases, the other types of medicines discussed in this information, may be given with dexamethasone in hospitalized patients who are on a mechanical ventilator (machine that breathes for patient) or need oxygen.

## Baricitinib

The FDA has granted emergency use authorization (EUA) for the rheumatoid arthritis medicine, baricitinib (Olumiant®) to treat COVID-19 in some cases.

- Baricitinib is an oral pill that seems to work against COVID-19 by reducing inflammation.
- Baricitinib seems to also have some ability to work against viruses.
- Baricitinib may be used for patients that are **hospitalized with COVID-19 and are on a mechanical ventilator (machine that breathes for patients) or have higher oxygen needs.**

## Monoclonal Antibody Medicines

Several **monoclonal antibody** medicines (these medicine names end in the letters **-mab**) are available to help with COVID-19 infections.

- Medicines such as casiriv**imab**/imdev**imab** and bamlaniv**imab**/etesev**imab** are used to treat mild to moderate COVID-19 in people who have a higher risk of getting serious illness due to COVID-19.
- Most of the time, monoclonal antibody medicines are given in outpatient settings. Some are given IV and some may be given via injection under the skin (subcutaneous injection).
- Monoclonal antibody medicines are most effective when given soon after COVID-19 symptoms start and before being hospitalized for COVID-19.
- A monoclonal antibody that can be used for hospitalized patients with COVID-19 is tocilizum**ab**. Tocilizum**ab** (Actemra®) may be added to treatment for hospitalized **patients with COVID-19 that require more help breathing and with more severe symptoms.** If tocilizum**ab** is not available, the NIH panel recommends either baricitinib or IV sarilum**ab** (if available) as an alternative to IV tocilizum**ab**.

## Research=Hope

Scientists, researchers, and doctors are working together and studying other medicines to:

- Treat COVID-19 infection
- Prevent and treat organ dysfunction from COVID-19 infection
- Prevent and treat lung injury from COVID-19 infection associated inflammation

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Other medicines you may have heard about have not demonstrated effectiveness against preventing or treating COVID-19. **Do not take any medicine without first discussing this with your doctor.**

**At this time (9-1-21), Monument Health does not use ivermectin, hydroxychloroquine, and chloroquine as treatments for or prevention of COVID-19. Ivermectin, hydroxychloroquine, and chloroquine do not currently have FDA approval or FDA emergency use authorization (EUA) for COVID-19 prevention or treatment.**

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