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PROVIDER HEALTH ALERT APRIL 25, 2022

HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS TO PROVIDE LOW BARRIER TREATMENT TO ELIGIBLE COVID-19 POSITIVE PATIENTS

Introduction:

At this time, supply of COVID-19 treatments in Contra Costa County is not limited and there is no scarcity. All outpatients with mild to moderate COVID-19 who are at risk for disease progression due to age (for example > 50 years old), not up-to-date on their COVID-19 vaccine, or are at a higher risk for disease progression, no matter their age, should be offered treatment if eligible based on the product Emergency Use Authorizations (EUA). Treatments should be offered regardless of vaccination status, and healthcare providers should ensure patients who are positive for COVID-19 have easy access to treatments.

Actions Requested of Healthcare Professionals and Organizations:

1. Ensure patients are aware of treatment options if positive for COVID-19.
 - Review with patients the importance of reporting home test results promptly to ensure providers can link them to treatments within treatment window.
2. Prescribe COVID-19 treatment to all eligible individuals.
 - Provide patients with the EUA fact sheet with their prescriptions.
3. Know what pharmacies have oral COVID-19 antivirals available for prescribing, and confirm with the pharmacy the medications are available before prescribing them to patients.
4. Ensure patients are aware of and review appropriate tools and guides to aid in decision making for COVID-19 treatments.
5. Ensure low barriers for patients to access treatment:
 - Have ways patients can access treatments and review their eligibility through a healthcare provider 7 days a week.
 - Do not require repeat testing as a pathway for treatment (accept patient-reported antigen and PCR).
 - Provide a prescription for COVID-19 oral antivirals to any patient who is eligible, no matter their insurance coverage.
6. Consider outreach for your COVID-19 patients to review eligibility and link to treatments as appropriate.

Low Barriers to Treatments

To ensure that patients are linked to treatments as soon as possible, and within the treatment window, healthcare providers and organizations should have easy access to COVID-19 treatment. Healthcare providers should know what pharmacies have COVID-19 treatments available in the area and review the [COVID-19 treatment locator](#) to find the easiest locations for patients (providers should also confirm with pharmacy directly supply of medication on hand prior to prescribing). Providers should also prescribe



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oral antiviral treatments to all eligible patients regardless of vaccine status or insurance coverage and decrease any barriers to quick treatments such as requiring repeat testing. Additionally, providers should ensure patients have access to treatments 7 days a week with a provider who can review eligibility, contraindications, and prescribe.

Treatment Guidelines:

Currently one of the preferred treatments for COVID-19, as reviewed by the [NIH treatment guidelines for outpatients](#), is Paxlovid, an oral antiviral treatment.

Paxlovid is available for adults and pediatric patients 12 years of age and older weighing at least 40 kg (90 lbs). It should be started as soon as possible, but within 5 days of symptom onset. It is given twice a day for 5 days and has been shown to reduce the relative risk of COVID-19 related hospitalization or death by 88% when compared to placebo.

Paxlovid includes nirmatrivir, a SARS-COVID-19 main protease, and ritonavir, an HIV-1 protease inhibitor and CYP3A inhibitor. Given this, Paxlovid is contraindicated with many commonly prescribed prescriptions and over-the-counter drugs, and also has some warnings and precautions. These warnings include renal dosing for individuals with an eGFR ≥ 30 to < 60 mL/min, and contraindications for severe Hepatic Impairment (Child Pugh Class C) and severe renal disease (eGFR < 30 mL/min). Recent updates to the EUA have allowed the availability of Paxlovid in dose package for the renal dosing to ease prescribing.

Health care providers should review the [Paxlovid EUA](#) and [fact sheet for healthcare](#) prior to prescribing Paxlovid for a complete list of contraindicated drugs, further details on administration, dosing, warnings, and precautions.

For patients who have a contraindication to Paxlovid, **alternative treatments options** (e.g. monoclonal antibodies) should be reviewed to see if they are eligible and these patients should be linked to treatments as appropriate.

In addition to the EUA, tools exist to aid providers in review of drug interactions and contraindication, as Paxlovid can safely be managed by medication adjustment in light of certain drug interactions. Resources can also be used to review if patients have any contraindications to Paxlovid, and if any contraindications are present to see if they are candidates for other potential COVID-19 treatment options.

These resources include:

- The [NIH treatment Guidelines for Outpatient Management of COVID-19](#), which includes updated guidance and changes that take into consideration variants,
- The [Liverpool COVID-19 Drug Interaction Tool](#), which is a comprehensive, up-to-date, evidence-based COVID-19 drug-drug interaction resource, freely available to healthcare workers, patients and researchers and also have an app that is available for use.



- The [HHS COVID-19 Therapeutics Decision Aid](#), which is a decision aid that reviews renal, hepatic, and pregnancy considerations.

In addition to treatments for those infected with COVID-19, certain adults and adolescents may also be eligible for pre-exposure prophylaxis, [Evusheld](#), if they are moderately to severely immunocompromised or unable to get vaccine due to a history of severe adverse reaction to a COVID-19 vaccine or any component. For further information and guidance on use of Evusheld please review [NIH Treatment Guidelines Overview of Prevention](#).

Resources:

- [CDC Health Alert regarding Updates to Outpatient Treatments for Mild to Moderate COVID-19](#)
- EUA for Paxlovid <https://www.fda.gov/media/155050/download>
- EUA for Remdesivir https://www.gilead.com/-/media/files/pdfs/medicines/COVID-19/veklury/veklury_pi.pdf
- EUA for Evusheld: <https://www.fda.gov/media/154701/download>
- EUA for BEBTELOVIMAB <https://www.fda.gov/media/156152/download>
- EUA for Molnupiravir <https://www.fda.gov/media/155054/download>
 - HSS Test to treat initiative: <https://aspr.hhs.gov/TestToTreat/Pages/default.aspx>
 - HSS Treatment Locator: <https://covid-19-therapeutics-locator-dhhs.hub.arcgis.com/>
 - HSS Test to treat locator: <https://covid-19-test-to-treat-locator-dhhs.hub.arcgis.com/>
- Liverpool COVID-19 Drug Interactions: <https://www.covid19-druginteractions.org/>
- HHS Therapeutic Decision Aid: <https://aspr.hhs.gov/COVID-19/Therapeutics/Documents/COVID-Therapeutics-Decison-Aid.pdf>
- NIH Treatment Guidelines for Outpatients: [Nonhospitalized Adults: Therapeutic Management | COVID-19 Treatment Guidelines \(nih.gov\)What's New | COVID-19 Treatment Guidelines \(nih.gov\)](#)
- NIH Treatment Guidelines: [About the Guidelines | COVID-19 Treatment Guidelines \(nih.gov\)](#)
- CDPH toolkit: [COVID-19 Treatments \(ca.gov\)](#)
- CDPH Treatment Homepage: <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Treatments.aspx>
- Contra Costa Health Services Provider Page: <https://cchealth.org/covid19/providers/>

