December 30, 2021

The MMS will continue to monitor developments related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and the response by state and federal agencies. For current information, including updates from NEJM, visit the dedicated page on the MMS website: massmed.org/covid-19.

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Public Health

Clinical guidance for COVID-19 therapeutics

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) recognizes that new information about available treatments and efficacy of treatments against current COVID-19 variants is constantly being released. DPH has created new clinical guidance about COVID-19 therapeutics to support your clinical decision-making.

Massachusetts is experiencing a significant increase in the number of COVID-19 cases where the Omicron variant has been identified. Given that Omicron is now the dominant variant in Massachusetts and Casirivimab/imdevimab and bamlanivimab/etesivimab have reduced activity against Omicron, their use for treatment or post-exposure prophylaxis is not recommended at this time.

The DPH is urging providers to closely review and the Department’s treatment recommendations (attached), for mild to moderate COVID-19 when supplies of
sotrovimab and oral antivirals are limited, to ensure patients at highest risk of progression to severe disease or death from COVID-19 receive these effective therapies.

Information for physicians and other health care providers about monoclonal antibody (mAb) therapy treatment for COVID-19 can also be found on the DPH’s website.

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**CDC shortens recommended isolation and quarantine period**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has shortened the recommended time for isolation for the public. People with COVID-19 should isolate for 5 days and if they are asymptomatic or their symptoms are resolving (without fever for 24 hours), follow that by 5 days of wearing a mask when around others to minimize the risk of infecting people they encounter.

*The change is motivated by science demonstrating that the majority of SARS-CoV-2 transmission occurs early in the course of illness, generally in the 1-2 days prior to onset of symptoms and the 2-3 days after.*

Additionally, CDC updated the recommended quarantine period for anyone in the general public who is exposed to COVID-19. For people who are unvaccinated or are more than six months out from their second mRNA dose (or more than 2 months after the J&J vaccine) and not yet boosted, CDC now recommends quarantine for 5 days followed by strict mask use for an additional 5 days. Alternatively, if a 5-day quarantine is not feasible, it is imperative that an exposed person wear a well-fitting mask at all times when around others for 10 days after exposure. Individuals who have received their booster shot do not need to quarantine following an exposure, but should wear a mask for 10 days after the exposure.

For all those exposed, best practice would also include a test for SARS-CoV-2 at day 5 after exposure. If symptoms occur, individuals should immediately quarantine until a negative test confirms symptoms are not attributable to COVID-19.

Read the complete press release [here](#).