February 23, 2022

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.

Public Health

DPH updates clinical guidance document on therapeutic treatments for COVID-19

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) has updated its clinical guidance document on therapeutic treatments for COVID-19. The February 22, 2022 therapeutics guidance replaces all previously issued therapeutic guidance. Providers should ensure that they are reading the most current version of this guidance as recommendations frequently change. The purpose is to provide guidance to health care providers on the use of therapeutics to treat COVID-19 positive individuals, as well as pre-exposure prophylaxis for immunocompromised individuals. Therapeutics should be considered for patients with a positive test for COVID-19 who are symptomatic and at risk for moderate-to-severe disease progression.

The latest guidance includes the following important updates:
• There is now sufficient supply of COVID-19 therapeutics in Massachusetts. Supply limitations should not be a barrier to an eligible patient's access to treatment.
• Providers must ensure that eligible patients, regardless of vaccination status, have access to COVID-19 therapies, as quickly as possible after symptom onset.
• Oral antivirals are available for all patients at risk for severe COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status.
• Bebtelovimab is now available for the treatment of mild to moderate COVID-19.
• Expansion of tixagevimab/cilgavimab (Evusheld) eligibility for use as pre-exposure prophylaxis in patients with moderate immunocompromise.
• Select Walgreens and CVS retail pharmacies have supply of oral antivirals. View a map of all locations offering oral antiviral and monoclonal antibody treatment online at MA COVID-19 Therapeutic Locator.

Read the DPH press release.

COVID-19 oral antiviral medications now offered at certain Walgreens, CVS, and Price Chopper pharmacies

Providers can now refer patients for oral antiviral (OAV) medications at select Walgreens, CVS, and Price Chopper pharmacies. Any provider can electronically submit a prescription to one of the stores that has an on-hand supply of treatment courses. The Massachusetts COVID-19 Therapeutics locator will list the Walgreens, CVS, and Price Chopper stores that have OAV medications on-hand. If the Walgreens you sent the prescription to has no available supply, the store will notify you and direct you to another Walgreens location with available supply. If the CVS you sent the prescription to has no available supply, the store will redirect you to the CVS antiviral store locator to find another store nearby with supply. Please note, currently, only Price Chopper store number 55 in Great Barrington has OAV. The Department of Public Health (DPH) will continue to expand additional pharmacies as supply increases.

Messaging and assets to promote new COVID treatments
The Massachusetts Department of Public health (DPH) has created resources to bring awareness to the availability of free treatments for COVID-19. Below are videos and messaging that may be shared with your patients or on your social media platforms.

**Short video spots:** these are 30-second videos promoting treatment:

- Dr. Jubbal, UMass Medical Center: [https://youtu.be/-RY-MafFwj0](https://youtu.be/-RY-MafFwj0)
- Dr. Garcia, Chief Medical Officer, Mass DPH: [https://youtu.be/8dDbSGb-1Mc](https://youtu.be/8dDbSGb-1Mc)

**Social media messages** (or you can retweet DPH):

- If you have recently tested positive for #COVID19MA and are experiencing symptoms, there are free treatment options that may be right for you. Contact your doctor or call the self-referral line at 508-213-1380 to see if you qualify. [mass.gov/covidtreatments](https://mass.gov/covidtreatments) Have you tested positive for COVID-19? Experiencing symptoms? Contact your doctor to find a treatment that’s right for you. [mass.gov/covidtreatments](https://mass.gov/covidtreatments)
- The COVID-19 pills and monoclonal antibody treatments can help keep you out of the hospital. They are free and available statewide. Learn more: [mass.gov/covidtreatments](https://mass.gov/covidtreatments)

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**Practice Management**

**FDA authorizes new monoclonal antibody for treatment of COVID-19 that retains activity against Omicron**

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued an emergency use authorization (EUA) for a new monoclonal antibody for the treatment of COVID-19 that retains activity against the omicron variant. The [EUA for bebtelovimab](https://www.fda.gov) is for the treatment of mild to moderate COVID-19 in adults and pediatric patients (12 years of age and older weighing at least 40 kilograms/ 88 pounds) with a positive COVID-19 test, and who are at high risk for progression to severe COVID-19, including hospitalization or death, and for whom alternative COVID-19 treatment options approved or authorized by the FDA.
are not accessible or clinically appropriate. Laboratory testing showed that bebtelovimab retains activity against both the omicron variant and the BA.2 omicron subvariant.

- Read the complete [FDA news release](#).
- Read the [health care provider fact sheet for bebtelovimab](#).

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**Upcoming COCA call: Updated Guidance for Clinicians on COVID-19 Vaccines**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will hold a Clinician Outreach and Communication Activity (COCA) call tomorrow, Thursday, Feb. 24. During this COCA Call, CDC experts will present: updated recommendations on COVID-19 vaccines for people who are moderately or severely immunocompromised, simplified recommendations for vaccination following receipt of passive antibody therapy, and summarized recommendations for COVID-19 vaccination by age group. Registration is not required. The slide set will be available on the day of the call on the [COCA Call webpage](#).

- **Date:** Thursday, Feb. 24, 2022
- **Time:** 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM ET
- **Webinar**
  - **Link:** [https://www.zoomgov.com/j/1603680276?pwd=NWlXNjJpcVFuQjRSUnRNRGF4aUVHUT09](https://www.zoomgov.com/j/1603680276?pwd=NWlXNjJpcVFuQjRSUnRNRGF4aUVHUT09)
- **Webinar ID:** 160 368 0276
- **Passcode:** 242440
- **Dial In:** 1-669-254-5252

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