

# Monoclonal antibody treatment for COVID-19

There is now a treatment available that can help keep some people from getting very sick or going to the hospital. It is called **monoclonal antibody (mAb) treatment or therapy**.

Monoclonal antibodies do not take the place of a COVID-19 vaccine. Getting vaccinated is the best way to prevent getting sick with COVID-19.

## Get care early

**Monoclonal antibody treatment must be taken early in your illness or shortly after you are exposed to COVID-19.** Monoclonal antibody treatment isn't right for everyone and needs to be ordered by a doctor or clinic. Talk to your healthcare provider right away about what is right for you. If you don't have a health care provider, call 211 for help finding one.

## What is monoclonal antibody treatment?

Monoclonal antibody treatment is a type of medicine given to someone who is mildly or moderately sick with COVID-19 and is NOT hospitalized. The treatment is a fluid given using a needle either into a vein or under the skin.

Monoclonal antibodies are proteins produced in a lab that are designed to work like the antibodies (disease-fighting proteins) made by your own body. The proteins attach to a spike protein on the outside of the COVID-19 virus. This blocks the virus from entering your cells, stopping the infection from spreading before it causes severe illness.

## Who is eligible for monoclonal antibody treatment?

To receive monoclonal antibody treatment, you must be 12 years old or older and weigh more than 88 pounds (40 kilograms).

To be eligible to receive monoclonal antibody treatment for a **COVID-19** infection, you must:

- Have tested positive for COVID-19
- Be within 10 days of starting to have symptoms
- Have mild to moderate symptoms
- Not be hospitalized for COVID-19
- Not be on new or increased oxygen therapy
- **And** be considered a high-risk patient (see below)

High risk conditions include:

- Any medical condition or other factor, including race or ethnicity, that puts you at higher risk of getting severe COVID-19
- 65 years of age or older
- Obesity or being overweight
- Pregnancy
- Some ongoing diseases like kidney disease, diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, sickle cell disease, or lung disease
- Disease or treatments that lower your immune response
- Certain neurological or developmental disorders
- Having a medical-related dependence on technology



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## What is in monoclonal antibody treatment?

In addition to the antibody protein, the treatment contains water, sugar, salt, a common stabilizer often used in foods and cosmetics (polysorbate 80), and amino acids. The treatment does not contain eggs, pork products, latex or fetal cells.

## How much does it cost?

Monoclonal antibodies for COVID are covered by the Oregon Health Plan and other insurance providers and should be low or no cost to you. Clinics can charge to administer the treatment, so check with your insurer and the clinic where you are receiving treatment to find out any potential cost.

## How do I get this treatment?

Contact your health care provider. You can also visit: [www.co.washington.or.us/covid-treatment](http://www.co.washington.or.us/covid-treatment) or [www.combatcovid.hhs.gov](http://www.combatcovid.hhs.gov)

## What to expect from monoclonal antibody treatment?

There are two ways to administer a monoclonal antibody treatment. Both use needles and must be given by a trained medical professional. One is given by infusion into a vein, the other is given subcutaneously under the skin.

### Infusion (In your vein)

You will have to go to an infusion center with specially trained staff to receive monoclonal antibodies as an infusion. It will take 20 - 50 minutes, and possibly longer. You will be asked to wait another hour after the infusion to make sure you don't have serious side effects.

### Subcutaneous (Under your skin)

If you receive monoclonal antibody treatment subcutaneously, you will get four shots with a short needle inserted under your skin in four separate places on your body. These usually include the back of the arms, the stomach and/or the thighs. Receiving all four shots takes about 1-3 minutes. You will be asked to wait an hour after your shots to make sure you don't have serious side effects.

## Side effects

With either treatment, you might have some discomfort at the injection site and other mild side effects. These are common and should go away in a few days. There is a possibility of a rare allergic reaction, or other serious reactions. Please ask your provider about warning signs so you know when to seek emergency medical care.

## Who to call with questions?

If you have questions or concerns about your treatment, call your healthcare provider or the clinic where you received your treatment.



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