



Durham Region Health Department FAX about...

For Health Care Professionals



COVID-19 Antiviral Prescribing

Ontario Health provides [guidance](#) for COVID-19 antiviral treatments in the outpatient setting. Individuals with mild to moderate COVID-19 symptoms and a positive test result (including rapid antigen tests) for SARS-CoV-2 who are at high risk for severe outcomes from the virus should be strongly considered for these treatments. COVID-19 antivirals are free to anyone with a prescription.

Identifying High-Risk Individuals

Ontario Health [guidance](#) defines individuals at high-risk of severe outcomes as those who are:

- 60 years of age or older
- 18 years of age or older and immunocompromised
- Adults with one or more comorbidity that puts them at high risk of severe COVID-19 disease
- Those who are unvaccinated or not up to date with COVID-19 vaccines
- Individuals at higher risk of poor outcomes from COVID-19: Indigenous people, members of racialized communities, people who are underhoused, those with intellectual, developmental, or cognitive disability, people who use substances and/or live with mental health conditions.

Paxlovid

Nirmatrelvir/ritonavir (Paxlovid) is the preferred first-line therapy when indicated. **It must be started within 5 days of symptom onset.**

Remdesivir

Remdesivir IV (Veklury) is indicated when Paxlovid is contraindicated (e.g., drug-drug interaction that cannot be safely managed or a medical contraindication) or when patients are beyond the treatment window for Paxlovid (>5 days). **It must be initiated within 7 days of symptom onset.** It is approved for high-risk adults and pediatric patients >40 kg. It is only available as an IV formulation which requires nursing support to administer on three consecutive days. Remdesivir is available through Home and Community Care Support Services (HCCSS) and HCCSS care coordinators will follow up with your patient (referral form found [here](#) or at <https://healthcareathome.ca>).

Additional resources are available on Ontario Health's [COVID-19 Treatment website](#).

If you have any feedback about Fax Abouts or want to recommend a topic for distribution, please email Faxabout@durham.ca.

October 10, 2023

905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729 | durham.ca/health

If you require this information in an accessible format, contact 1-800-841-2729.

