FAQs for Patients/Public

Sotrovimab (Monoclonal Antibody) Outpatient Treatment

Alberta Health Services (AHS) is offering Sotrovimab to some Albertans to treat mild to moderate COVID-19 symptoms. Eligible patients will get the treatment at an AHS site, from the EMS Mobile Health Unit (MIH) in their homes, or through a third-party provider in Calgary and Edmonton.

Sotrovimab is not a replacement for immunization against COVID-19. Albertans are strongly encouraged to get the COVID-19 vaccine.

What is sotrovimab?
Sotrovimab is a medication that is made of a protein that attaches to the COVID-19 virus in your body and prevents it from entering healthy cells. It is given through a vein over the course of one hour.

Has Sotrovimab been approved for use?
Health Canada has authorized the use of Sotrovimab to treat mild to moderate COVID-19 that has been confirmed by testing.
Health Canada has authorized Sotrovimab based on limited clinical testing in humans. Learn more on the Health Canada consumer information summary for Sotrovimab.

What is sotrovimab used for?
Health Canada has authorized Sotrovimab to treat mild to moderate COVID-19 that has been confirmed by testing. Sotrovimab is used to prevent these symptoms from getting worse in people who have a high risk of needing to go to the hospital for COVID-19.

Who can get Sotrovimab?
In Alberta, Sotrovimab is approved for adults who:
- have a positive AHS-confirmed test for COVID-19 (confirmed by text message)
- have mild to moderate COVID-19 symptoms
- can receive the treatment within five days from when symptoms started

Treatment will be given to patients who are most likely to get severe COVID-19 illness and are at a greater risk of being hospitalized. This includes:
- People who are unvaccinated or who have received one dose of COVID-19 vaccine and are:
  - 55 years of age and older, regardless of other health conditions
  - Pregnant (when the potential benefits outweigh the risks to the fetus)
  - 18 years of age and older with a with one of the following health conditions:
- diabetes requiring medication
- obesity (BMI >30)
- chronic kidney disease (estimated glomerular filtration rate, <60 ml per minute per 1.73 m² of body-surface area)
- congestive heart failure (New York Heart Association class II, III, or IV)
- chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and moderate-to-severe asthma

- Vaccinated or unvaccinated patients who are immunocompromised due to one of the following reasons:
  - have received a transplant (solid organ or stem cell)
  - are an oncology patient who has received a dose of any IV or oral chemotherapy or other immunosuppressive treatment since December 2020
  - are patients with inflammatory conditions (e.g. rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, inflammatory bowel disease) receiving a dose of any systemic immunosuppressive treatment since December 2020.

Sotrovimab is not a replacement for immunization against COVID-19. **Albertans are strongly encouraged to get fully immunized against COVID-19.** If you receive Sotrovimab, you should wait 90 days after your treatment before getting a COVID-19 vaccine to ensure you get maximum benefit from the vaccine.

**What if I’ve only received a positive test result from a rapid/at-home test?**
If you’ve received a positive test result from a rapid/at-home test, you will still need to take a test and have the test results confirmed by AHS before you receive the Sotrovimab infusion. You must book a test immediately before calling the dedicated Health Link line at 1-844-343-0971.

If you are a transplant patient, you will receive another rapid test from a healthcare provider. The test can be performed by the healthcare provider administering your treatment, prior to your infusion. If your test result is negative, you will not be eligible to receive the infusion.

**Why is this medication limited to people with COVID symptoms for less than five days?**
Sotrovimab and Paxlovid™ work best when they’re administered in early infection, before the virus has moved beyond a mild to moderate infection. If you have symptoms of COVID-19, it’s important to get tested as soon as possible. This gives AHS time to determine if you are eligible for Sotrovimab or Paxlovid™ treatment.

**Can Sotrovimab be used in patients under 18 years of age?**
For patients aged 12 to 17, there has been no research on Sotrovimab use. It may be considered if the patient meets one of the current outlined criteria for immunocompromised patients. For all pediatric cases, a consultation with a Paediatric Infectious Disease specialist will occur to determine if Sotrovimab is an appropriate treatment. If a child 12 to 17 tests positive for COVID-19, and meets the criteria and the patient/family is interested in learning more about the treatment, please contact your specialist or call 1-844-343-0971 for further information. Children are not eligible to receive Paxlovid™ and Sotrovimab is not approved by Health Canada to be used in patients under the age of 12.
Why are immunocompromised patients who have been vaccinated eligible for Sotrovimab treatment?

Sotrovimab treatment is intended for individuals who are at high risk of progressing to severe disease (hospitalization, need for intensive care or death). Fully vaccinated individuals are expected to develop an immune response that places them at a low risk for severe COVID-19. However, immunocompromised individuals may not respond fully to vaccines, so providing access to sotrovimab treatment can better protect them.

How were the health conditions for unvaccinated individuals selected?
Aside from pregnancy, the age cut off and health conditions are generally based on the evidence from the COMET-ICE study Health Canada used to approve Sotrovimab. These health conditions were identified to have more chance of serious outcomes from COVID-19 disease.

Why is pregnancy included if pregnant patients were not included in the study?
Pregnancy was included because pregnant women are at a higher risk than the general population to progress to severe COVID-19. Groups like the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, recommend treatment with medications like Sotrovimab (COVID-19 FAQs for Obstetrician-Gynecologists, Obstetrics | ACOG). The decision to proceed with treatment can be discussed with your doctor. A specialist may be consulted if you have more questions.

How will eligible patients be identified and informed?
If you are 18 years of age or older and test positive for COVID-19, you will hear about treatments in the same text message from AHS that notifies you of your positive COVID-19 test result. You may also hear about Sotrovimab or Paxlovid™ from your family doctor or another healthcare provider.

If you are unvaccinated, have received only one dose of COVID-19 vaccine or are immunocompromised and are interested in getting the treatment or learning more about Sotrovimab and Paxlovid™, follow the instructions in the text message that confirms your positive rest result. You will be asked visit ahs.ca/covidopt to determine if you are eligible for Sotrovimab treatment. If you meet the criteria, you should then leave a message at the dedicated Health Link line at 1-844-343-0971. Health Link staff will call you back and ask you some questions before referring you to a healthcare professional who will determine if you are eligible, get your consent and book your appointment or issue a prescription for Paxlovid™.

If you are a transplant patient, tell your medical specialist or specialized healthcare team if you test positive for COVID-19. A member of your healthcare team will answer your questions, and help determine if you are eligible for treatment. They will advise you to call and leave a message at 1-844-343-0971 and a Health Link provider will return your call. The provider who calls you back will confirm your information, make a chart and send it to the physician team member who will get your consent, order the medication and refer you for appointment booking. They may also issue a prescription for Paxlovid™.

If you are a resident of a Long-Term Care facility, a primary care physician, nurse practitioner, or family member can call the dedicated number at 1-844-343-0971 on your behalf, if you believe you meet the eligibility criteria to receive Paxlovid™ or Sotrovimab.
**How is Sotrovimab given?**
Sotrovimab is given intravenously (through a vein) by a qualified health professional. The medicine is given over 60 minutes (one hour). You will be watched closely for another 60 minutes after getting the treatment. You can expect the appointment to last about 2.5 hours, including setup time.

**Where will the treatment be given?**
Treatment will be provided to eligible patients either at an AHS clinic, a third-party clinic or by EMS MIH in your home, in the areas they service, depending on your location in the province. Details on appointment booking will be provided to eligible patients. In order to receive the infusion, you may need to travel to a designated clinic.

**How will I be monitored after receiving the treatment?**
If you are treated with Sotrovimab, a healthcare provider will call you within about two days. You will also get an information sheet after your infusion. After the follow up call, you should continue to monitor your health. Tell your family doctor or usual healthcare provider about any side effects or COVID-19 symptoms that get worse. Or call Health Link at 811 to speak to a registered nurse. **For urgent help, call 911.** You should also follow up with your family doctor or healthcare provider 10 days after your COVID-19 symptoms started.

**What are the possible side effects of Sotrovimab?**
Current clinical trials have found relatively mild side effects in less than one out of every 100 people who get Sotrovimab. Side effects that have been found include:

- diarrhea
- headache
- shortness of breath

There was also one case of an allergic reaction in the 430 people involved in the study.

Since there is limited clinical data about Sotrovimab, you might have unexpected side effects that have not been reported yet. The healthcare provider who does the infusion will monitor you during the treatment and one hour after you receive Sotrovimab. They will provide treatment, as needed, to manage any side effects you have.

For more details on avoiding potential side effects and what to watch for, see the Health Canada consumer information summary.

**What should be done if my COVID-19 symptoms get worse?**
Even with Sotrovimab treatment, your COVID-19 symptoms may continue or get worse.

- Monitor your health and tell the healthcare provider about your symptoms when they call you after your treatment.
- Call Health Link at 811 or your healthcare provider/family doctor if you have more questions or concerns.
Call 911 right away if you have severe symptoms such as:
- difficulty breathing
- severe chest pain
- feelings of confusion
- loss of consciousness

Learn more about managing your COVID-19 symptoms.

Can I get vaccinated for COVID-19 after I get Sotrovimab?
Yes. But you should wait 90 days after getting Sotrovimab before getting a COVID-19 vaccine. It is important to wait 90 days to allow your body to respond to the vaccine and develop a good level of antibodies without interference from the medication. Sotrovimab is not a replacement for immunization against COVID-19. Albertans are strongly encouraged to get fully immunized against COVID-19.

Why is Alberta using this drug?
Sotrovimab can prevent mild to moderate COVID-19 from becoming more severe and requiring people to be admitted to the hospital. Sotrovimab and Paxlovid™ can be especially helpful for patients who might otherwise have a high risk of being hospitalized or developing more serious health problems due to COVID-19.

Is Sotrovimab being used elsewhere?
Yes. Outpatient treatments like Sotrovimab and Paxlovid™ are currently being used in many areas of the United States, as well as in Saskatchewan, Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia. AHS is working with other health authorities in Canada to learn how they are using this treatment.

Do I need to pay for this treatment?
No. The treatment is covered and paid for by Alberta Health. If you are eligible for the treatment, you do not need to pay for it.

Why hasn’t this drug been considered before now?
Sotrovimab is a new treatment for COVID-19. The clinical trial was only recently finished. For more information, see the Health Canada consumer information summary for Sotrovimab.

For more information on the Sotrovimab or Paxlovid™, visit ahs.ca/covidopt.