

# MANAGEMENT OF ADULTS WITH MILD COVID-19

## LEGEND

**EBR:** Evidence-Based Recommendation  
**CBR:** Consensus-Based Recommendation  
**PP:** Practice Point

Living  
guidance

Not prioritised  
for review

## General

### MANAGING RISK OF INFECTION

- Follow national advice for use of PPE in non-inpatient healthcare settings during the COVID-19 outbreak. **PP** [Taskforce/ICEG; NHMRC]
- Manage any person clinically and epidemiologically assessed as being a suspected case of COVID-19 as if they are a confirmed case until they have a negative SARS-CoV-2 PCR test done while symptomatic, and there is an alternative diagnosis or symptoms have resolved, as per [CDNA advice](#). **PP** [Taskforce]

### DETERMINING SETTING OF CARE

The most appropriate setting will depend on:

- Local public health policy
- Clinical evaluation of the person with COVID-19
- Evaluation of the home setting including capacity for strict infection control
- Ability to monitor for clinical deterioration and the availability of rapid transfer to higher level of care
- Patient preference. **PP** [Taskforce/WHO]

### BASELINE ASSESSMENT

Check for signs of moderate/severe disease (refer to [Assessment for suspected COVID-19 Clinical Flowchart](#))

Check status of oro/nasopharyngeal swab results.

No baseline investigations are required for mild COVID-19.

Whole genome sequencing of all COVID-19 cases should be undertaken.

**PP** [Taskforce/CDNA]

### Definition of disease severity

#### Mild illness

Adults not presenting any clinical features suggestive of moderate or severe disease or a complicated course of illness.

Characteristics:

- no symptoms
- or mild upper respiratory tract symptoms
- or cough, new myalgia or asthenia without new shortness of breath or a reduction in oxygen saturation

### Access to care

This flowchart should be applied after considering features of the individual patient, their preferences and the context in terms of rurality/remoteness, public health responses and proximity to higher-level care. Application of the flowchart will vary with local current COVID-19 prevalence and availability of testing. Early transfer to a major centre should be considered for those at risk of deterioration. Use of virtual care, including telehealth, should be considered. **PP** [Taskforce]

## COVID-19 THERAPIES

### SUPPORTIVE CARE

Manage mild COVID-19 in a similar way to seasonal flu and advise patients to rest. **PP** [BMJ]

An antipyretic is generally not required for mild COVID-19, but paracetamol or ibuprofen as appropriate can be considered for symptomatic relief. **PP** [ACSQHC]

### ANTIBIOTICS

Do not prescribe antibiotics for mild COVID-19 unless indicated for other reasons, such as community acquired pneumonia. **PP** [Taskforce]

### DISEASE-MODIFYING TREATMENTS

#### Sotrovimab

Consider using sotrovimab for the treatment of COVID-19 within five days of symptom onset in adults who do not require oxygen and who have one or more risk factors for disease progression. **EBR** [Taskforce]

In patients with confirmed COVID-19 who do not require oxygen, sotrovimab probably decreases the risk of hospitalisation if taken within five days of onset of symptoms.

Results are based on the COMET-ICE trial, in which non-vaccinated adults were treated with a single one-hour intravenous infusion of 500 mg sotrovimab. Based on the inclusion criteria for this trial, risk factors for disease progression include the following:

- Diabetes (requiring medication)
- Obesity (BMI > 30 kg/m<sup>2</sup>)
- Chronic kidney disease (i.e. eGFR < 60 by MDRD)
- Congestive heart failure (NYHA class II or greater)
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (history of chronic bronchitis, chronic obstructive lung disease, or emphysema with dyspnoea on physical exertion)
- Moderate-to-severe asthma (requiring an inhaled steroid to control symptoms or prescribed a course of oral steroids in the previous 12 months)
- Age ≥ 55 years

CONDITIONAL RECOMMENDATION FOR

#### Sotrovimab

Within the patient population for which sotrovimab is conditionally recommended for use (as listed above), decisions about the appropriateness of treatment with sotrovimab should be based on the patient's individual risk of severe disease, on the basis of age or multiple risk factors, and COVID-19 vaccination status.

Consider using sotrovimab in unvaccinated or partially vaccinated patients and patients who are immunosuppressed regardless of vaccination status.

Do not routinely use sotrovimab in fully vaccinated patients unless immunosuppressed. **CBR** [Taskforce]

CONSENSUS RECOMMENDATION

#### Budesonide

Consider using inhaled budesonide with a dose of 800 µg bd for the treatment of symptomatic COVID-19 in adults who do not require oxygen and who have one or more risk factors for disease progression. **EBR** [Taskforce]

CONDITIONAL RECOMMENDATION FOR

## Treatment

**Casirivimab + imdevimab (Ronapreve/REGEN-COV)**

CONDITIONAL RECOMMENDATION FOR

Consider using casirivimab plus imdevimab for the treatment of COVID-19 in **mild outpatients** who do have one or more risk factors for disease progression within 7 days of onset of symptoms. **EBR** [Taskforce]

[Aspirin](#)  
[Azithromycin](#)  
[Colchicine](#)

[Convalescent plasma](#)  
[Hydroxychloroquine](#)

[Interferon β-1a](#)  
[Hydroxychloroquine plus azithromycin](#)

[Interferon β-1a plus lopinavir-ritonavir](#)  
[Lopinavir-ritonavir](#)

NOT RECOMMENDED

Do not use for the treatment of COVID-19. **EBR** [Taskforce]Do not initiate dexamethasone or other systemic corticosteroids for the treatment of mild COVID-19. **PP** [Taskforce]**Disease-modifying treatments not recommended outside of clinical trials**

NOT RECOMMENDED

Do not use the following disease modifying treatments for the treatment of COVID-19 outside of randomised trials with appropriate ethical approval. **EBR** [Taskforce]:

- [Angiotensin 2 receptor agonist \(C21\)](#)
- [Anakinra](#)
- [Aprepitant](#)
- [Baloxavir marboxil](#)
- [Bamlanivimab](#)
- [Bamlanivimab plus etesevimab](#)
- [Bromhexine hydrochloride](#)
- [Chloroquine](#)
- [Combined metabolic cofactor supplementation \(CMCS\)](#)
- [Comostat mesilate](#)
- [Darunavir-cobicistat](#)
- [Doxycycline](#)
- [Dutasteride](#)
- [Enisamium](#)
- [Favipiravir](#)
- [Fluvoxamine](#)
- [Human umbilical cord mesenchymal stem cells](#)
- [Immunoglobulin plus methylprednisolone](#)
- [Inhaled Interferon β-1a](#)
- [Interferon β-1b](#)
- [Interferon gamma](#)
- [Interferon-kappa + tff2](#)
- [Intravenous Immunoglobulin](#)
- [Ivermectin](#)
- [Ivermectin plus doxycycline](#)
- [Lenzilumab](#)
- [N-acetylcysteine](#)
- [Nitazoxanide](#)
- [Peginterferon lambda](#)
- [Recombinant human granulocyte colony-stimulating factor](#)
- [Regdanvimab](#)
- [Ruxolitinib](#)
- [Sofosbuvir-daclatasvir](#)
- [Sulodexide](#)
- [Telmisartan](#)
- [Tofacitinib](#)
- [Triazavirin](#)
- [Umifenovir](#)
- [Vitamin C](#)
- [Vitamin D \(calcifediol/cholecalciferol\)](#)
- [Zinc](#)
- [Other disease-modifying treatments](#)

Trials are needed in special populations, including children and adolescents, pregnant and breastfeeding women, older people living with frailty and those receiving palliative care. Until further evidence is available, do not use other disease-modifying treatments in these populations unless they are eligible to be enrolled in trials. **PP** [Taskforce]

These disease-modifying treatments should still be considered for other evidence-based indications in people who have COVID-19. **PP** [Taskforce]

**THERAPIES FOR PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS****ASTHMA AND COPD****Inhaled or oral steroids**

CONSENSUS RECOMMENDATION

Use inhaled or oral steroids for the management of people with co-existing asthma or COPD and COVID-19 as you normally would for viral exacerbation of asthma or COPD. Do not use a nebuliser. **CBR** [Taskforce]

**DIABETES AND CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE****ACEIs/ARBs**

RECOMMENDED

In patients with COVID-19 who are receiving ACEIs/ARBs, there is currently no evidence to deviate from usual care and these medications should be continued unless contraindicated. **EBR** [Taskforce]  
Stopping these medications abruptly can lead to acute heart failure or unstable blood pressure. **PP** [Taskforce]

In people with suspected or confirmed COVID-19, the use of other treatments such as insulin, other diabetes medications, or statins should continue as usual. **PP** [Taskforce]

**GENERAL**

Ensure that people with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 continue to receive their usual care for pre-existing conditions. **PP** [Taskforce]  
People taking routine NSAIDs for a chronic condition should continue with treatment. **PP** [ACSQHC]

**CONDITIONS MANAGED WITH IMMUNOSUPPRESSANTS**

In people with suspected or confirmed COVID-19, only cease or change the dose of long-term immunosuppressants such as high-dose corticosteroids, chemotherapy, biologics, or disease-modifying anti-rheumatic drugs (DMARDs) on the advice of the treating specialist. **PP** [Taskforce]

**OESTROGEN CONTAINING THERAPIES**

CONSENSUS RECOMMENDATION

Consider stopping oral menopausal hormone therapy (MHT), also known as hormone replacement therapy (HRT), in women with mild or **moderate** COVID-19. **CBR** [Taskforce]

Before restarting oral MHT, review the indication for this. If MHT is continued, consider using a transdermal preparation.

CONSENSUS RECOMMENDATION

Stop oral menopausal hormone therapy (MHT) in women with **severe** or critical COVID-19. **CBR** [Taskforce]

Before restarting oral MHT, review the indication for this and consider transitioning to a transdermal preparation.

CONSENSUS RECOMMENDATION

In women who have COVID-19 and who are taking oestrogen-containing contraception, manage these medications as per usual care. **CBR** [Taskforce]

In women who stop or suspend contraception when they have COVID-19, restart contraception at the time of discharge or when acute symptoms have been resolved.

**THINGS TO WATCH FOR**

Advise the person with COVID-19 and their carer or family members to look out for the development of new or worsening symptoms, especially breathing difficulties which may indicate the development of pneumonia or hypoxaemia.

Reassure the person that 4 out of 5 people with COVID-19 will have a mild illness and will usually recover 2 to 3 weeks after the initial onset of symptoms.

If respiratory symptoms do worsen, this is most likely to occur in the 2nd or 3rd week of illness. **PP** [Taskforce]

## Monitoring cont.

Where appropriate, use pulse oximetry with adults to assist in assessing and monitoring the severity of respiratory symptoms and detect early deterioration. Provide patients with education on how to self-monitor using pulse oximetry and when to call a GP or 000. **PP** [Taskforce]

Be aware that different pulse oximeters have different specifications, and that some can under- or overestimate readings especially if the saturation level is borderline. Overestimation has been reported in people with darker skin. [NICE UK]

For some patients, symptoms may persist for longer than 4 weeks, or new symptoms may develop. The range of potential long term symptoms of COVID-19 is as yet unknown. For patients who present with possible [long-term symptoms of COVID-19](#), supportive treatment is required. **PP** [Taskforce]

## Next steps in care

### ESCALATION OF CARE

Transfer the person to hospital if they develop symptoms or signs suggestive of moderate or severe COVID-19, such as:

- SpO<sub>2</sub> ≤ 92%<sup>1</sup>
- increasing shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- blue lips or face
- pain or pressure in the chest
- cold, clammy or pale and mottled skin
- new confusion or fainting
- becoming difficult to rouse
- little or no urine output
- coughing up blood

**PP** [BMJ]

Escalation of care may be required if infection control cannot be adequately ensured. **PP** [Taskforce]

### RELEASE FROM ISOLATION

- Refer to relevant State and Territory public health advice for the conditions that must be met prior to release of a person from isolation.
- Review patient [Care at Home](#) advice and provide to patient if appropriate.

**PP** [Taskforce]

## Follow up care

- Assist people to connect to a GP if they do not have one.
- When the acute phase of the illness has resolved, and the patient is mobile, undertake a comprehensive review to assess their ongoing and rehabilitation needs.
- Review medications that were stopped or started. **PP** [Taskforce]

### TRANSFER TO HOSPITAL

Check the person's wishes regarding transfer, and whether they have an Advanced Care Directive for proceeding with hospital management.

Clarify their SARS-CoV-2 status.

If the person wishes to stay in their place of residence or community-based care, discuss care arrangements with the patient, their carer(s) and family, and the local Public Health Unit. Involve their GP, and local palliative care services if available. Be aware that out-of-hospital care will be dependent on the capacity of carer(s) and family to manage infection risk at home and Public Health directives.

If the person wishes to be admitted to hospital, advise the carer or family member to call an ambulance and to **notify** the paramedics that the person has suspected or confirmed COVID-19.

**PP** [Taskforce]

**1** – Specified O<sub>2</sub> levels apply only to patients who do not have underlying lung diseases associated with resting hypoxaemia. Note: in adults with darker skin pulse oximetry may underestimate severity of hypoxaemia.

#### Sources

**ACSQHC** – Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care. COVID-19 Position Statement - Managing fever associated with COVID-19 (Revised 29 April 2020).

**BMJ** – Covid-19: a remote assessment in primary care. *BMJ* 2020;368:m1182 doi:10.1136/bmj.m1182 (25 March 2020)

**National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce** – Australian guidelines for the clinical care of people with COVID-19.

**National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce/ICEG** – Australian guidelines for SARS-CoV-2 infection prevention and control of COVID-19 in healthcare workers V1.0.

**NHMRC** – Australian Guidelines for the Prevention and Control of Infection in Healthcare (2019).

**WHO** – World Health Organization. Home care for patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 and management of their contacts: Interim guidance. 13 Aug 2020.