

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

VERSION 20.0

PUBLISHED
26 NOVEMBER 2020

General

MANAGING RISK OF INFECTION

- Follow national advice for use of PPE in non-inpatient healthcare settings during the COVID-19 outbreak. **PP** [Taskforce/AHPPC]
- 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. **PP** [Taskforce]



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

Rural and remote 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.

Treatment

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

Hydroxychloroquine

Lopinavir-ritonavir

Interferon β -1a

NOT RECOMMENDED

Do not use these medications for the treatment of COVID-19.

Do not initiate dexamethasone or other corticosteroids for the treatment of mild COVID-19. **PP** [Taskforce]

Disease-modifying treatments not recommended outside of clinical trials

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

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">AprepitantAzithromycinBaloxavir marboxilBamlanivimabBromhexine hydrochlorideCalcifediolChloroquineColchicine | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Convalescent plasmaDarunavir-cobicistatFavipiravirFluvoxamineHuman umbilical cord mesenchymal stem cellsHydroxychloroquine plus azithromycinImmunoglobulin plus | <ul style="list-style-type: none">methylprednisoloneInterferon β-1bInterferon gammaInterferon-kappa + tff2Intravenous ImmunoglobulinIvermectinN-acetylcysteineRecombinant human granulocyte colony-stimulating factor | <ul style="list-style-type: none">RemdesivirRuxolitinibSofosbuvir-daclatasvirTelmisartanTocilizumabTriazavirinUmifenovirOther 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

Treatment

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]

Monitoring

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.

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]

Clinician-guided pulse oximetry may help with detection of lower than expected oxygen levels and early detection of deterioration.
PP [Taskforce, WHO]

ESCALATION OF CARE

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

- symptoms or signs of pneumonia
- severe 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]

Next steps in 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]

Follow up care

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]

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).

AHPPC – Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC). Guidance on use of personal protective equipment (PPE) in non-inpatient healthcare settings, during the COVID-19 outbreak. 17 June 2020.

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

Taskforce – Current guidance from the National COVID-19 Clinical Evidence Taskforce

WHO – World Health Organization. Home care for patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 and management of their contacts: Interim guidance. 20 Aug 2020