

Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health
10025 Jasper Avenue NW
PO Box 1360, Stn. Main
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 2N3 Canada
www.health.alberta.ca

Dear Colleagues,

As more of you begin to prescribe therapies for your patients with COVID-19, we'd like to provide you with an update:

What do we know about rebound symptoms after treatment with Paxlovid™?

A small percentage of patients may develop a relapse of COVID-19 symptoms within a few days of completing a course of treatment (e.g., recurrence of sore throat, runny nose, etc.). This may be accompanied by a new positive test for COVID-19 (PCR or Rapid Antigen Test), after testing negative. (Of note, this also occurs in a small percent of patients who have not received treatment.) This is not a new infection. At this time, there is no evidence to support the prescribing of another course of Paxlovid™ and it is NOT recommended that treatment be extended or repeated.

You may find the following link to a recent FDA informative: <https://www.fda.gov/drugs/news-events-human-drugs/fda-updates-paxlovid-health-care-providers>

Does Treatment of Acute COVID-19 Prevent Long COVID?

At this time, there is no evidence that treatment with Paxlovid™ will influence the total number of people who will experience prolonged symptoms, or their severity. This is an important area for research. Treatment does lower the risk of progression of COVID-19 and severe outcomes, but should not be offered as a means of preventing Long COVID.

Should Symptoms of Long COVID be treated with Paxlovid™?

Current therapies for COVID-19 (including Paxlovid™, Remdesivir and monoclonal antibodies) target actively replicating virus during acute infection. There is no reason to believe that there would be any benefit to offering such therapies weeks or months later for symptoms of Long COVID. At this time, Paxlovid™ should not be considered a treatment for individuals experiencing symptoms of Long COVID.

Please feel free to refer your patients to our websites:

- www.ahs.ca/covidopt
- <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page17397.aspx>

As a closing reminder, there can be significant drug interactions with Paxlovid™ and it is critical to have a complete drug history prior to prescribing, including over-the-counter and herbal/natural products. Paxlovid™ should NOT be prescribed to patients with transplants on immunosuppressive medications because of the potential for serious drug interactions.

Thank you for your assistance in providing access to effective outpatient COVID therapeutics for your patients.

Yours sincerely,



Deena Hinshaw
Chief Medical Officer of Health
Alberta Health



Dr. Mark Joffe
VP and Medical Director
Cancer Care Alberta, Clinical Support
Services
and Provincial Clinical Excellence
Alberta Health Services
Professor of Medicine, University of
Alberta