

March 2022 – Updated access criteria for remdesivir for COVID-19

A limited amount of remdesivir is now available for use in New Zealand through DHB hospitals.

Remdesivir is an unapproved medicine, and this means its quality, safety and efficacy have not been evaluated by Medsafe. For more information on prescribing of unapproved medicines under Section 25 of the Medicines Act 1981, please refer to the information on the Medsafe website. Remdesivir is currently undergoing regulatory review by Medsafe.

The prescribing physician is required to confirm the patient meets the below criteria. This form can be used to confirm all the criteria are met. It **does not** need to be sent to Pharmac.

Initial application – from any relevant practitioner

All of the following:

- 1 Patient has confirmed (or probable) symptomatic COVID-19; and
- 2 Patient's symptoms started within the last 7 days; and
- 3 Any of the following:
 - 3.1 Immunocompromised individuals not expected to reliably mount an adequate immune response to COVID-19 vaccination or SARS-CoV-2 infection; or
 - 3.2 Patient is unvaccinated* and has at least three of the following: Aged 65 years or over, Māori or any Pacific ethnicity, or any of the comorbidities as listed below**; or
 - 3.3 Patient is vaccinated* and has at least five of the following: Aged 65 years or over, Māori or any Pacific ethnicity, or any of the comorbidities as listed below**; and
- 4 Either:
 - 4.1 Patient does not require supplemental oxygen (oxygen saturation >93%); or
 - 4.2 Patient does not require supplemental oxygen at saturations no lower than baseline for patients with chronic resting hypoxia; and
- 5 Not to be used in conjunction with other COVID-19 antiviral treatments; and
- 6 Treatment not to exceed five days.

Notes:

Treatment may be given in an inpatient or outpatient setting

* 'Vaccinated' defined as having received at least two vaccine doses more than seven days earlier.

** Comorbidities associated with a higher risk of severe outcomes are: severely immunocompromised, significant cardiac disease, uncontrolled hypertension, uncontrolled diabetes, chronic lung disease, chronic kidney disease, chronic liver disease, cancer, BMI 40 or higher. More detail available on the

[Ministry of Health website](#)

The treatment course is limited to 5 days for eligible patients. DHB hospitals can order stock direct from Onelink. Wholesale stock is held and distributed to DHB Hospitals by Onelink in Auckland.

For more information, such as dosage and method of administration, please refer to the [Factsheet provided by Gilead Sciences \(New Zealand\)](#).