



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE
Ashwin Vasani, MD, PhD
Commissioner

2022 HEALTH ADVISORY #4

COVID-19 Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis for Immunocompromised Patients and Treatment Updates

- COVID-19 pre-exposure prophylaxis with Evusheld can protect people who are moderately to severely immunocompromised or unable to receive COVID-19 vaccination due to a severe adverse reaction to a COVID-19 vaccine or their components.
- Evusheld is available in New York City (NYC). Refer eligible patients or order Evusheld through pharmacies listed on the [COVID-19 Therapeutics Locator](#), including Alto Pharmacy, which delivers directly to NYC health care providers at no cost.
- Evusheld is not a substitute for vaccination in people for whom vaccination is recommended.
- The monoclonal antibody sotrovimab is no longer recommended for treatment in NYC. Bebtelovimab is expected to be effective against circulating variants, including BA.2.
- Oral antiviral treatments are now available at several pharmacies in addition to Alto pharmacy.

April 4, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

COVID-19 cases have begun to [increase](#) in NYC. Protect your patients by ensuring they are up to date with their COVID-19 vaccines, encouraging them to get tested regularly with at-home or provider-based tests, making sure at risk patients are aware of and can access treatment, and offering eligible patients Evusheld for pre-exposure prophylaxis.

Evusheld is a combination of two long-acting monoclonal antibodies (tixagevimab and cilgavimab) administered by intramuscular injection. In [clinical trials](#), Evusheld reduced the risk of symptomatic COVID-19 by 83% over 6 months. Evusheld should only be given to patients who are not currently infected and have not had a recent known exposure to someone with COVID-19. Evusheld is authorized for people ages 12 or older who weigh at least 88 pounds (44 kg) and:

- Have [moderate to severe immune compromise](#) and may not mount an adequate immune response to COVID-19 vaccination, or
- Cannot be vaccinated due to a history of severe adverse reaction to a COVID-19 vaccine or their components.

For a non-exhaustive list of medical conditions or treatments that may result in moderate to severe immune compromise, prescribing information, and additional details, review the Evusheld [Fact Sheet for Healthcare Providers](#).

Accessing Evusheld

Evusheld is currently provided for free by the U.S. government. To find facilities and pharmacies with Evusheld in stock, visit the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) [COVID-19 Therapeutics Locator](#). Specialty pharmacies that would like to order Evusheld should refer to the [New York State Department of Health instructions](#) or email COVID19therapeutics@health.ny.gov. NYC providers can also prescribe Evusheld through Alto Pharmacy, which delivers Evusheld to provider practices and clinics at no cost.¹ In addition, NYC Health + Hospitals will be accepting referrals for Evusheld administration.

For instructions on referring patients to Health + Hospitals and prescribing through Alto Pharmacy, visit nyc.gov/health/covidprovidertreatments and look for “Accessing Evusheld” in the “Monoclonal Antibodies” section. Refer to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services [COVID-19 Monoclonal Antibodies webpage](#) and [New York State Medicaid Coverage and Billing Guidance](#) for information on coding, payment, and billing for the administration of Evusheld.

SARS-CoV-2 Variants and Evusheld

The Omicron variant currently accounts for nearly all COVID-19 cases in NYC. Due to decreased neutralization activity of Evusheld against Omicron subvariants BA.1 and BA.1.1 (BA.1+R346K), the initial dosage has been increased to 600 mg (300 mg of tixagevimab and 300 mg of cilgavimab). Evusheld is expected to [retain activity against the BA.2 Omicron subvariant](#).

SARS-CoV-2 Variants and Sotrovimab

The BA.2 Omicron subvariant prevalence [exceeds 50% in HHS Region 2](#), which includes New York State. As sotrovimab has shown [significantly reduced efficacy against BA.2](#), it is [no longer authorized for use in Region 2 states](#). Providers are recommended to use other authorized therapies for treating their patients, including the oral antivirals [Paxlovid \(preferred\)](#) and [molnupiravir](#) and the monoclonal antibody [bebtelovimab](#).

Vaccination and Treatment Remain Essential Tools to Combat COVID-19

[Vaccination](#) is the most effective way to prevent COVID-19 and should be offered or recommended for all patients, including those with moderate to severe immunocompromise. Evusheld provides an important, additional layer of protection to immunocompromised patients.

Inform patients with [risk factors for severe COVID-19](#), including those who received Evusheld, to get tested immediately if they have symptoms or were exposed to someone with COVID-19,

¹ The NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has partnered with Alto Pharmacy for free same or next day delivery of Evusheld to NYC providers.

and of how to get treatment. Treatment is most effective when given soon after symptom onset.

With increasing supplies of Paxlovid and molnupiravir, these treatments are now available at several NYC pharmacies. To find a pharmacy, check the [COVID-19 Therapeutics Locator](#). Alto Pharmacy will continue to provide rapid home delivery at no cost to patients.² Visit nyc.gov/health/covidprovidertreatments for information on available treatments, eligibility criteria, prescribing instructions, clinical considerations, and other tools and resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Celia Quinn', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Celia Quinn MD, MPH
Deputy Commissioner
Division of Disease Control

² The NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has partnered with Alto Pharmacy for free same or next day delivery of COVID-19 oral antivirals to NYC residents.