

Fact Sheet: COVID-19 Test to Treat

The Biden-Harris Administration is launching a new nationwide Test to Treat initiative that will give individuals an important new way to rapidly access free lifesaving treatment for COVID-19. In this program, people will be able to get tested and – if they are positive and treatments are appropriate for them – receive a prescription from a health care provider, and have their prescription filled all in one location. These “One-Stop Test to Treat” locations will be available at hundreds of locations nationwide, including pharmacy-based clinics, federally-qualified community health centers (FQHCs), and long-term care facilities. People will also continue to be able to be tested and treated by their own health care providers who can appropriately prescribe these oral antivirals at locations where they are being distributed.

While vaccination continues to provide the best protection against COVID-19, therapies are now available to help treat eligible people who do get sick. The Biden-Harris Administration has invested in a medicine cabinet of COVID-19 treatments, which includes two oral antiviral pills – Pfizer’s Paxlovid and Merck’s Molnupiravir – that can help prevent severe illness and hospitalization when taken soon after symptom onset.

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) already distributes COVID-19 treatments, including oral antivirals, to states and territories for free on a weekly basis. All qualified health care providers can prescribe these therapeutics to patients who are at increased risk for developing severe COVID-19.

Effective March 7, HHS will also begin distributing oral antiviral pills directly to participating Test to Treat pharmacy-based clinics, making more treatments available to more people in more locations. ASPR will also launch a program for long-term care pharmacies to directly order these antivirals to facilitate increased access for eligible long-term care residents who are at increased risk for developing severe COVID-19.

These pharmacy-based clinics and long-term care facilities join hundreds of FQHCs in our hardest-hit and highest-risk communities – these centers will provide access for people to get tested, receive a prescription from a health care provider if appropriate, and have their prescription filled, all at one convenient location.

Building upon the existing distribution of oral antivirals to thousands of locations across all states and territories, the Test to Treat initiative is part of a broader strategy to quickly connect eligible individuals who are at high risk of getting very sick from COVID-19 to appropriate treatments. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is also connecting our nation’s veterans who test positive at VA medical centers directly to treatment. For more information regarding available COVID-19 treatments, visit www.aspr.hhs.gov.

Frequently Asked Questions about the Test to Treat Initiative

What pharmacy-based clinics, health centers, and long-term care facilities have partnered with HHS as part of the Test to Treat initiative?

Some of the nation's largest pharmacy chains are participating. The participating locations have health clinics inside their stores where health care providers can prescribe these COVID-19 therapeutics to eligible people who need them. These oral antivirals may only be prescribed by a qualified health care provider. There are also hundreds of federally-qualified health centers already participating in our hardest-hit and highest-risk communities, with additional long-term care facilities that serve high-risk residents also coming on board.

Which treatments will participating Test to Treat locations receive?

Pharmacy-based clinics participating in the initiative are eligible to receive the oral antiviral pills from Merck (molnupiravir) and Pfizer (Paxlovid) through direct allocations from HHS/ASPR beginning the week of Mar. 7, 2022.

How does the Test to Treat program work?

Patients will be able to get tested – and if they are positive and eligible for treatment – to receive an appropriate prescription from a qualified health care provider, and have their prescription filled all in one location. Individuals who receive COVID-19 test results through at-home tests or another testing site can also utilize a Test to Treat location to receive a prescription from a qualified healthcare provider and treatment on the spot if eligible.

Will there be a Test to Treat site near me?

The initial launch of the Test to Treat initiative includes hundreds of federally-qualified health centers, pharmacy-based clinics, and long-term care facilities across the country. HHS will enroll additional sites in the coming weeks as the program launches and expands. In addition to the Test to Treat sites, states and territories will also continue to receive oral antiviral pills available for distribution throughout their jurisdictions.

How will people find Test to Treat sites as more come online?

A federal Test to Treat website is in development with anticipated launch in mid-March.

Will the Test to Treat program reduce the amount of oral antiviral treatments that a state or territory receives?

No, this program will have a separate federal supply that will not impact current state and territory allocations that are going to other sites and providers. The Test to Treat program is not intended to interfere with or supplant existing allocation protocols, but rather to offer more options for places where eligible people can quickly get needed care.

Are pharmacists themselves able to prescribe the oral antiviral pills (Paxlovid and molnupiravir)?

No. The Test to Treat initiative includes sites that have health care providers available to provide timely and thorough assessment and discussion relevant to oral antiviral treatment option(s), consistent with FDA requirements regarding these drugs. The Test to Treat initiative does not change existing requirements for a qualified health care provider to write the prescription.

Can I get oral antivirals through my regular health care provider?

Yes. As has been the case until now, qualified health care providers will continue to be able to prescribe oral antivirals to their eligible patients who are at increased risk of developing severe COVID-19. Patients will be able to pick up those prescriptions wherever antivirals are being distributed.

Can I bring at-home test results to a Test to Treat site for assessment to receive treatment?

Yes. The Test to Treat initiative does **not** require that an individual is tested at the Test to Treat site.

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