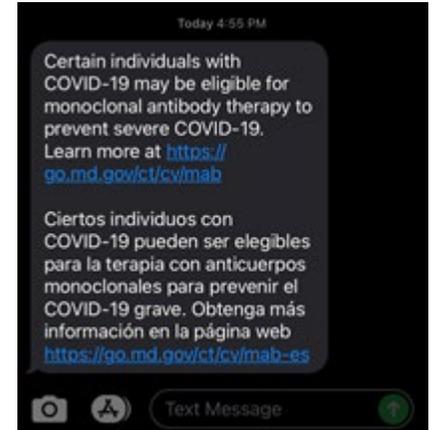


## Monoclonal Antibodies FAQs

### First Things First:

*If you recently tested positive for COVID-19 or have been in close contact with a person with known or suspected COVID-19, you may be eligible to receive a free monoclonal antibody (mAb) treatment. The Maryland Department of Health is currently reaching out to individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 via text message with more information regarding this treatment option. To learn more, call 410-649-6122 or visit the [MDH website](#).*



### What are monoclonal antibodies?

Monoclonal antibodies are laboratory-made proteins to fight the virus that causes COVID-19. Although it is not a cure, treatment may lessen the severity of symptoms and help keep high-risk patients out of the hospital.

### How can I get monoclonal antibody treatment?

Talk to your health care provider as soon as you test positive for COVID-19 or are aware that you have been exposed to COVID-19 so they can determine if monoclonal antibodies are the right treatment for you. They can provide a referral for treatment.

If you do not have a healthcare provider, you can contact [eVisit](#) to schedule a virtual appointment or complete a [self-referral form](#). If it is determined you are eligible, you will be referred to an infusion site for treatment. If you do not have access to the internet you may call 410-649-6122 (Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) to receive information on monoclonal applicability over the phone.

### Where is monoclonal antibody treatment being offered?

There are dozens of facilities offering monoclonal antibody treatment in Maryland. Your healthcare provider, who can also refer you to a facility based on availability, may also have mAb treatment on hand.

Locations can also be found through the [HHS website](#). Please note: this website may not reflect the most recent changes.

## Does monoclonal antibody treatment work?

Clinical trials have shown fewer COVID-19-related hospitalizations or emergency room visits and a decrease in the amount of virus in an infected person's blood in patients at high risk for developing severe COVID-19 symptoms. Clinical trials have also shown a decrease in severe disease and hospitalizations for unvaccinated persons who have been exposed to COVID-19. It is important to note that monoclonal antibodies are not a substitute for vaccination.

## Who is eligible for monoclonal antibody treatment?

You may be eligible for monoclonal antibody treatment if you:

- Recently tested positive for COVID-19 and have mild to moderate symptoms, or
- Have recently been exposed to a known or suspected case of COVID-19 and meet the criteria below:

Monoclonal antibody treatment may be used in adults and adolescents (12 and older) who:

- Recently had a positive COVID-19 test, whether or not you have been vaccinated against COVID-19
- Are within 10 days of first experiencing symptoms
- Do not need to be hospitalized for COVID-19 treatment
- Weigh at least 88 pounds
- Are in one of the following high-risk categories:
  - Are age 55 to 64 AND have cardiovascular disease, hypertension, chronic respiratory diseases or COPD
  - Have diabetes, obesity, kidney disease or other serious chronic conditions
  - Are 65 years old or older
  - Are pregnant
  - For adolescents: high BMI, sickle cell disease, heart disease, neurodevelopmental disorders, a medical-related technological dependence, asthma, or other chronic respiratory disease
  - Or who have been determined by their healthcare provider to be at high risk for worsening and/or hospitalization (*Continued*)

You may also be eligible for monoclonal antibody treatment to prevent COVID-19. If you have been exposed in the past four days to a known or suspected case of COVID-19, have a significant medical condition, and are in one of the following categories, you may be eligible for treatment to prevent COVID-19:

- Are not fully vaccinated
- Are vaccinated but not expected to have an adequate immune response to the vaccine
- Are in a congregate living situation such as a nursing home or prison

### **How are monoclonal antibodies administered to COVID-19 patients?**

Patients receive monoclonal antibody treatment through a single IV infusion, followed by at least one hour of observation. In certain circumstances the monoclonal antibodies can be administered by injection under the skin (subcutaneous), particularly when IV is not possible.

### **What are the side effects of monoclonal antibody treatment?**

The most common reported side effects are nausea and vomiting. Other side effects with bamlanivimab and etesevimab include diarrhea, dizziness, headache, and itchiness. Additional side effects with casirivimab/imdevimab (branded as REGEN-COV) include hyperglycemia and pneumonia. Additional side effects of sotrovimab include allergic reaction. Receiving any medicine by IV may cause brief pain, bleeding, bruising, soreness, swelling and infection where you get the needle.

### **Will my insurance cover monoclonal antibody treatment?**

While monoclonal antibody treatment is free if you meet the requirements, there may be an administration fee or other associated costs related to the process of infusing the antibodies that may not be covered by insurance. Please check with your insurance provider.

### **Can I get a COVID-19 vaccine if I have monoclonal antibody treatment?**

Those who have had monoclonal antibody treatment should wait 90 days before getting vaccinated.

## Is monoclonal antibody treatment effective against the new variants of COVID-19 that have emerged?

Available monoclonal antibody therapy is expected to be effective against circulating variants, including delta.

### Resources:

<https://covidlink.maryland.gov/content/testing/monoclonal-antibody-treatment/>

<https://covidlink.maryland.gov/content/faqs/#faqMA>

**THE HEALTH**  
DEPARTMENT AND  
**YOU**

For health questions about COVID-19, call the Health Department COVID-19 information line at 410-313-6284.

Updated 10/20/21

**410.313.6284 | hchealth.org**

