



December 27, 2021

Dear Colleague,

We write to alert you that last week, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) gave two oral COVID-19 antiviral medications Emergency Use Authorizations (EUA).

Please see below for descriptions of each medication and guidance.

Paxlovid (Pfizer), an oral antiviral medication, received an EUA from the FDA on December 22, 2021. The drug is indicated for the treatment of COVID-19 among patients ages 12 and over who weigh 40 kg or more, test positive for COVID-19, are within 5 days of the onset of symptoms, have mild to moderate symptoms, and do not require hospitalization but are at risk for progression to severe disease based on underlying conditions. It is taken as three (3) pills twice a day for five (5) days, and the full course is required to achieve the benefit of the medication.

The U.S. Government has purchased 10 million courses of Paxlovid and will begin distribution to jurisdictions on or about December 27, 2021. The initial two-week allocation to Maryland is 960 courses. The U.S. Government expects larger allocations of doses nationwide in January 2022 and further expansion thereafter.

Molnupiravir (Merck), an oral antiviral medication, received an EUA from the FDA on December 23, 2021. The drug is indicated for the treatment of COVID-19 among patients ages 18 and over who weigh 40 kg or more, test positive for COVID-19, are within five (5) days of the onset of symptoms, have mild to moderate symptoms, and do not require hospitalization, but are at risk for progression to severe disease based on underlying conditions and for whom alternative COVID-19 treatment options are not accessible or clinically appropriate. The medication is not indicated during pregnancy. It is taken as four (4) pills twice a day for five (5) days, and the full course is required in order to achieve the benefit of the medication.

The U.S. Government will allocate 300,000 courses of this medication nationally and will begin a pro rata distribution to jurisdictions on or about December 27, 2021. The initial two-week allocation to Maryland is 4,500 courses. The U.S. Government expects allocations to continue on a bi-weekly basis.

Prioritization

With the initial supply, the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) recommends that providers prioritize the use of these medications to the highest-risk patients. In order to assist in prioritization, MDH recommends providers follow the National Institute of Health [guidance](#) developed for prioritization of monoclonal antibodies and that recommends treating the highest-risk patients first.

Testing

In order to begin treatment within the recommended five (5) day window from onset of symptoms, early COVID-19 testing and rapid return of results are critical. Diagnosis of COVID-19 symptomatic patients with rapid antigen tests has been demonstrated to be both

sensitive and specific.¹ These tests can be done in provider's offices, at testing sites, or by home testing kits. Additional information on office-based testing can be found [here](#).

Prescribing

Physicians, Certified Registered Nurse Practitioners, and Physician Assistants are the only categories of providers permitted to prescribe this medication. The oral antiviral medication is not a controlled substance; however, prescribers are required to add their United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) number to the prescription to assist in tracking and record-keeping of the medication. If a prescriber does not have a DEA number, one may substitute an NPI number.

Pharmacy Locations and Logistics

Due to the initial, small size of the allocation to Maryland, the medication will be provided to a limited number of pharmacies located strategically across the State. The list of the pharmacies, addresses, and their contact numbers can be found below. All of these pharmacies have both drive-through and home-delivery capabilities. The home-delivery service may have distance limitations and associated charges.

In order to avoid sending prescriptions and patients to a pharmacy that has depleted its stock, the State will provide an estimate of inventory by site posted on the [MedChi website](#) twice a day. The twice per day update does still allow for gaps of time during which stock may have been depleted. In addition, Walgreens Pharmacy will provide a phone number that will allow providers to get real-time inventory information for each pharmacy in the near future. You are encouraged to either visit the MedChi website or to call the local Walgreens Pharmacy to ensure availability *prior to sending a prescription*.

EUA Resources

For Paxlovid:

1. [Paxlovid EUA](#)
2. [Provider Information sheet](#)
3. [Patient and Caregiver Information sheet](#)

For Molnupiravir:

1. [Molnupiravir EUA](#)
2. [Provider information Sheet](#)
3. [Patient and Caregiver information Sheet](#)

Other Resources

There will be a *Testing and Therapeutics Special Covid Update Webinar*, on Wednesday 12/29 starting at 5:00 PM ([registration link](#)).

- a. The webinar will include time for Q&A and slides, and a recording will be sent out to all registrants following the webinar.


Availability

¹ Dinnes J, Deeks JJ, Berhane S, et al. Rapid, point-of-care antigen and molecular-based tests for diagnosis of SARS-CoV-2 infection. Cochrane Database Syst Rev. 2021;3(3):CD013705. Published 2021 Mar 24. doi:10.1002/14651858.CD013705.pub2

Due to the initial, small size of the state allocation, the medication will be provided to a limited number of pharmacies located strategically across the State. (Please see the attached Appendix A).

In order to avoid sending prescriptions and patients to a pharmacy that has depleted its stock, the State will provide an estimate of inventory by site posted on the [MedChi website](#) twice a day.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'H. Haft', with a stylized, cursive flourish at the end.

Howard Haft, MD, MMM, CPE, FACPE
Senior Medical Advisor
Maryland Primary Care Program (MDPCP)

Appendix A: Walgreens Participating Locations, 12/27/2021

Please note inventory levels may change and total courses available are based on allocation from the Federal Government.

| Store Name | Address | County | Allocated Courses of Molnupiravir | Allocated Courses of Paxlovid |
|-----------------|---|------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Walgreens 17857 | 101 Bishop Murphy Dr, Frostburg, MD 21532 | Allegany | 140 | 40 |
| Walgreens 12266 | 209 N 3rd St, Oakland, MD 21550 | Garrett | 140 | 40 |
| Walgreens 13892 | 17703 Virginia Ave, Hagerstown, MD 21740 | Washington | 140 | 40 |
| Walgreens 10402 | 11745 Rousby Hall Rd, Lusby, MD 20657 | Calvert | 140 | 40 |
| Walgreens 10063 | 6300 Crain Hwy, La Plata, MD 20646 | Charles | 140 | 40 |
| Walgreens 17917 | 12701 Laurel Bowie Rd, Laurel, MD 20708 | Prince George's | 140 | 40 |
| Walgreens 10905 | 640 Sunburst Hwy, Cambridge, MD 21613 | Dorchester | 140 | 40 |
| Walgreens 15284 | 900 N Washington St, Baltimore, MD 21205 | Baltimore City | 160 | 40 |
| Walgreens 12130 | 909 Mount Hermon Rd, Salisbury, MD 21804 | Wicomico | 140 | 40 |
| Walgreens 6779 | 9616 Harford Rd, Baltimore, MD 21234 | Baltimore County | 140 | 40 |
| Walgreens 17944 | 110 Mitchells Chance Rd, Edgewater, MD 21037 | Anne Arundel | 140 | 40 |
| Walgreens 11949 | 5585 Twin Knolls Rd, Columbia, MD 21045 | Howard | 140 | 40 |
| Walgreens 19380 | 6970 Crestwood Boulevard, Frederick, MD 21703 | Frederick | 140 | 40 |
| Walgreens 10977 | 301 E Pulaski Hwy, Elkton, MD 21921 | Cecil | 140 | 40 |
| Walgreens 11763 | 701 Washington Ave, Chestertown, MD 21620 | Kent | 140 | 40 |
| Walgreens 19966 | 19927 Century Blvd, Germantown, MD 20874 | Montgomery | 140 | — |
| Walgreens 11057 | 2440 Centreville Rd, Centreville, MD 21617 | Queen Anne's | 140 | — |
| Walgreens 11169 | 950 Beards Hill Rd, Aberdeen, MD 21001 | Harford | 140 | — |
| Walgreens 13457 | 500 Meadow Creek Dr, Westminster, MD 21158 | Carroll | 140 | — |
| Walgreens 5408 | 1300 E North Ave, Baltimore, MD 21213 | Baltimore City | 140 | — |

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|--------------------|--|---------------------|--------------|------------|
| Walgreens 17672 | 30283 Triangle Dr, Charlotte Hall, MD 20622 | Saint Mary's | 140 | — |
| Walgreens 19451 | 21 Denton Plaza, Denton, MD 21629 | Caroline | 140 | — |
| Walgreens 9967 | 8174 Ocean Gtwy, Easton, MD 21601 | Talbot | 140 | — |
| Walgreens 11951 | 11085 Cathell Road, Berlin, MD 21811 | Worcester | 140 | — |
| Walgreens 13893 | 1631 Dual Hwy, Hagerstown, MD 21740 | Washington | 140 | — |
| Walgreens 17333 | 1000 Key Parkway, Frederick, MD 21702 | Frederick | 140 | — |
| Walgreens 19427 | 403 George Claus Blvd, Severn, MD 21144 | Anne Arundel | 140 | — |
| Walgreens 9632 | 2970 Shasho Pl, Waldorf, MD 20603 | Charles | 140 | — |
| Walgreens 10076 | 2560 Quarry Lake Dr, Baltimore, MD 21209 | Baltimore County | 140 | — |
| Walgreens 11064 | 21400 Zeeman Rd, Rock Hall, MD 21661 | Kent | 140 | — |
| Walgreens 17859 | 5741 Silver Hill Rd, District Heights, MD 20747 | Prince George's | 140 | — |
| Walgreens 9927 | 735 S Salisbury Blvd, Salisbury, MD 21801 | Wicomico | 140 | — |
| Total | | | 4,500 | 600 |