

Antiviral treatment (Paxlovid) is available for higher-risk individuals with COVID-19

Learn more at: [Antiviral treatment \(Paxlovid\) is available for higher-risk individuals with COVID-19 \(ontariohealth.ca\)](https://www.ontariohealth.ca/en/health-topics/antiviral-treatment-paxlovid-is-available-for-higher-risk-individuals-with-covid-19)

You may have heard about Paxlovid, an anti-viral medication for COVID-19. Here are the key things to know:

- Most people with COVID-19 symptoms just need to self-isolate and rest, drink plenty of fluids and take analgesics such as acetaminophen (as needed) for headaches, fevers or muscle aches.
- Paxlovid is used to treat adults who have mild to moderate COVID symptoms and are at high-risk of worsening to severe illness, where they might require hospitalization. Depending on your age, health, and vaccination status (see below*), it could be an option for you.
- You may be at higher risk if you are:
 - immunocompromised (have an immune system that is weakened by a health condition or medications)
 - 70 and older
 - 60 and older with less than three vaccine doses
 - 18 and older with less than three vaccine doses and at least one of the following risk conditions:
 - Obesity
 - Diabetes
 - heart disease
 - hypertension
 - congestive heart failure
 - chronic respiratory disease (including cystic fibrosis)
 - cerebral palsy
 - intellectual or developmental disability
 - sickle cell disease
 - moderate or severe kidney disease
 - moderate or severe liver disease
 - pregnancy
- If you think you may qualify for treatment and have COVID-19 symptoms (even if mild), please contact our local COVID clinical assessment centre (where you can get tested and assessed for antiviral therapy/provided a prescription) or contact your primary care provider. Do not wait for your symptoms to become severe: treatment must be started within five days of your first symptoms.
 - Take this screener to determine if you are at higher risk of severe COVID-19 and may benefit from these treatments. [COVID-19 Antiviral Tool \(ontario.ca\)](https://www.ontariohealth.ca/en/health-topics/covid-19-antiviral-tool)
- If you have one or more of the following symptoms you should immediately call 911 or go to the emergency department:
 - severe difficulty breathing (finding it harder and harder to breathe, struggling for each breath, can only speak in single words)
 - severe chest pain (constant tightness or crushing sensation)
 - feeling confused or unsure of where you are losing consciousness