

COVID-19 medicine eligibility and pathway



This fact sheet provides information for people with disability and their supports about the eligibility and pathway for accessing COVID-19 medicines.

COVID-19 medicines – who is eligible?

These people are eligible to take COVID-19 medicines if they test positive for COVID-19:

- 70 years or older
- Between 50 and 69 years old, and have 2 risk factors
- 30 years and older, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and have 2 risk factors
- Between 18 and 49 years old and immunocompromised.

Immunocompromised conditions include:

- common autoimmune diseases such as lupus, rheumatoid arthritis, type 1 diabetes, HIV and AIDS
- medical treatments such as chemotherapy, radiotherapy
- having immune suppressive therapy
- organ transplant, including bone marrow transplant
- blood cancer.

Risk factors include:

- living in residential aged care
- living with disability with multiple conditions (but not limited to living in supported accommodation)
- living remotely with reduced access to higher level healthcare
- neurological conditions
- chronic respiratory disease including moderate or severe asthma
- diabetes
- being overweight
- serious heart disease
- chronic kidney failure disease.

What to do if you test positive for COVID-19:

1. **Isolate right away.**
2. Tell your support person or family that you tested positive for COVID-19.
3. Call your GP and **get an appointment right away.**

COVID-19 medicines will only work if you start to take them in the 5 days after you get your symptoms.

If you cannot get an appointment with your GP, you may do any of the following:

1. **Call** the National Coronavirus Helpline on **1800 020 080 (press 5)**. You can ask them to help you speak to your GP. **Make sure you have your GPs name and phone number with you.**
2. **Call** Health Direct on **1800 022 222**. They will help find a GP to see you.
3. **Use** the Service Finder on the [Health Direct](#) website to find a GP near you.

What happens when you get an appointment with your GP?

1. You can talk to the GP on the phone or via telehealth. You can have a longer telehealth appointment because you have COVID-19 and the GP needs to examine you very well.
2. The GP will check if the COVID-19 medicines are the right treatment for you and what type of medicine you can have. **You have to let the GP know if you have a hard time swallowing.** Some COVID-19 medicines must be swallowed whole.

The GP will ask you about the following:

- your medical condition
- what sicknesses you have had in the past
- medicines and vitamins and you are taking
- if you are pregnant
- if you are breastfeeding
- what vaccinations you have had, when you had them and if you have plans to get a COVID-19 vaccination and booster shots. **You may not need COVID-19 medicines if you are fully vaccinated for COVID-19.** This means that you have had two doses of the COVID-19 vaccine.

What happens if the COVID-19 medicine is right for you?

1. If the COVID-19 medicine is safe and the right treatment for you, you (or your guardian) must sign a consent form before the GP gives you the script.
2. The GP may prescribe an alternative COVID-19 medicine if the oral medicines are not right for you.
3. The GP can send an electronic prescription to a smart phone or to an email address, so that you, your family, a friend or support person can get the medicines from the chemist.

TIPS

- Visit the [Pharmacy Guild Australia's website](#) to find out which pharmacies stock up on COVID-19 medicines.
- Call the chemist ahead of time to check if they have the medicines. COVID-19 medicines are expensive