



NEWS RELEASE

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Two COVID-19 Treatments No Longer Authorized for Use

Limited Efficacy Against Omicron

Atlanta – The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has announced that two monoclonal antibody (mAb) treatments for COVID-19 are currently not authorized for use due to their limited effectiveness against the Omicron variant. Omicron is still circulating widely in the U.S., including Georgia.

Monoclonal antibodies are synthetic, laboratory-created proteins that mimic the immune system's ability to fight off the virus that causes COVID-19. The virus that causes COVID-19 can mutate over time, resulting in certain treatments not working as effectively against all variants such as Omicron. Data shows that Lilly's bamlanivimab plus etesevimab and Regeneron's casirivimab plus imdevimab are not effective against the Omicron variant which, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is still responsible for about 99% of new COVID cases in Georgia.

There are several other therapies such as oral antivirals from Pfizer and Merck, remdesivir (intravenous antiviral), and sotrovimab (mAb) that have been shown to be effective against the Omicron variant. These treatments are for non-hospitalized patients with mild-to-moderate COVID-19, who are at high risk for severe illness, hospitalization or death. Depending on your age, health history, and how long you have had symptoms, you may qualify for treatment if infected. You will need to discuss your eligibility with your healthcare provider.

While it's critical that we have ways to treat individuals who contract COVID-19, the authorized treatments are not a substitute for vaccination and recommended booster dose. Data have clearly demonstrated that the COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective and can lower your risk of developing COVID-19, or serious illness, hospitalization or death if you do get sick.

Basic prevention measures should also be followed to help prevent further spread of COVID and mitigate outbreaks of infection, especially in public settings: wear a mask, physically distance, and wash your hands frequently with soap and water.

For updates on COVID-19, follow @GaDPH and @GovKemp on Twitter and @GaDPH and @GovKemp on Facebook.

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