

Patient updates

Sept. 30, 2022

Dear patients,

As we enter the fall season, we expect to see people continue to get sick with COVID-19. We are writing to share information about how to manage safely at home, and who may be offered treatment with a medication called Paxlovid.

Eligibility for Paxlovid to treat COVID-19

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

- Most people with COVID-19 symptoms just need to self-isolate and rest, drink plenty of fluids and take pain relief medications such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) for headaches, fevers or muscle aches. [This information sheet](#) can guide you about what to do when you are ill.
- 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, it could be an option for you. To learn more about Paxlovid, and who may be eligible for treatment, view this [fact sheet](#).
- To access this treatment, you must have a positive COVID-19 test result from a Rapid Antigen Test (administered by you or by your healthcare provider), or a molecular (i.e. PCR) test. You can pick up a free rapid test kit at a location near you by searching on [this page](#).

If you think you may have COVID-19, and may need Paxlovid treatment, please do this [self-screening questionnaire](#). This tool will help you know if Paxlovid treatment may be an option for you. It will also let you know where you can get a PCR test to confirm if you have COVID-19.

If you are a high-risk patient with COVID-19 symptoms and a negative home Rapid Antigen Test (RAT), we recommend that you visit a COVID testing centre to get a PCR test. This is due to the possibility that the home RAT test could be falsely negative.

We are not booking appointments in our clinics for PCR tests at this time.

If you have questions or think you may qualify for treatment and have COVID-19 symptoms (even if mild), call us. Do not wait for your symptoms to become severe: **treatment must be started within five days of your first symptoms.** We can help determine next steps.

We are always here for you and will ensure you get the care you need when you need it.

Take care and be well,

SMHAFHT Leadership Team