In November, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued an Emergency Use Authorization to allow the use of monoclonal antibodies for the treatment of mild to moderate symptoms of COVID-19 in adults and pediatric patients.

What are monoclonal antibodies?

Monoclonal antibodies are laboratory-made proteins that mimic your immune system’s ability to fight off harmful viruses. Bamlanivimab and casirivimab + imdevimab are monoclonal antibodies that are specifically designed to protect against the spike protein of COVID-19. These proteins are designed to stop the virus from entering the human cells.

Who can get this treatment?

To receive the treatment you must be in one of the high risk categories:

- Are age 12 or older
- Are age 12 to 17
- Are age 55 to 64
- Are age 55 to 64
- Are age 65 or older

AND have any of the following:

- Cardiovascular disease
- Hypertension
- Chronic respiratory diseases
- COPD
- Chronic kidney disease
- BMI of 35 or greater
- Diabetes
- Immunosuppressive disease

These medications are NOT approved for use in patients who are hospitalized due to COVID-19 or require oxygen therapy. Benefits of treatment have not been observed in patients hospitalized due to COVID-19. Monoclonal antibodies may be associated with worse clinical outcomes when given to patients with COVID-19 requiring oxygen ventilation. Individual administration sites may have additional criteria for use of these monoclonal antibody therapies in patients.
Antibody Therapy

What is it?
A protein that binds to the virus and stops it from infecting you

What is it for?
Treats those who are already infected with the COVID-19 virus

How fast does it work?
As soon as it is given

How long does the protection last?
Weeks to months

Vaccine

What is it?
A piece of the virus your immune system can recognize

What is it for?
Trains the immune system to fight against the COVID-19 virus

How fast does it work?
1-2 weeks after both doses are given

How long does the protection last?
Years to lifetime (may need boosters)

Can I get treatment if I get sick?
If you receive a positive test result for COVID-19 and fall into any of the high risk categories, your doctor may recommend treatment to you.

Where can I go to get treatment?
To see locations that offer monoclonal antibody therapy through this program, scan the QR code with your cell phone.

Treatment locations
Open the camera app
Focus the camera on the QR code
Follow the instructions to see locations

These medications will be available at no cost to patients, although health care facilities may charge for administering the medicine.

For more information contact:
Arkansas Department of Health
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