

COVID-19 Rebound after Paxlovid Treatment

Issue

On 5/24/22, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a [Health Alert Network \(HAN\) Health Advisory](#) update on the potential for COVID-19 illness recurrence or “COVID-19 rebound” after Paxlovid treatment.

COVID-19 rebound: The brief return of COVID-19 symptoms or a new positive viral test *after* a recovering individual tests negative, reported to occur between 2 to 8 days after initial recovery.

This may be a natural progression of SARS-CoV-2 infection, independent of Paxlovid treatment / COVID-19 Vaccine history.

Based on current, limited case report information:

- **COVID-19 rebound illness is not considered reinfection with COVID-19 or resistance to Paxlovid.**
- **Illness recurrence and positive test results improve or resolve without additional treatment in about 3 days.**
- **There are no reports of severe disease among persons with COVID-19 rebound.**
- **Infection transmission during COVID-19 rebound is possible (although, relative likelihood of transmission potential during rebound period compared to initial infection period remains unknown).**

Healthcare Providers

Paxlovid is *still* recommended for early-stage (within 5 days of symptom onset) treatment of viral-testing confirmed, mild to moderate COVID-19 in adult and pediatric patients (12 years of age and older weighing at least 40kg), who are at high risk for progression to severe disease, including hospitalization and death (See [EUA](#) for full prescribing info).

For patients with COVID-19 rebound:

- Currently, no evidence suggests additional treatment for illness recurrence.
- Continue patient monitoring for potential COVID-19 rebound, even after a full treatment course of Paxlovid.
- Provide additional clinical evaluation in patients whose COVID-19 rebound symptoms persist or worsen.
- Report cases of COVID-19 rebound after Paxlovid treatment to Pfizer using the online tool: [Pfizer Safety Reporting](#)
- Advise patients with COVID-19 rebound to follow [CDC guidelines for isolation](#) to prevent further spread.

Residents/Caregivers

Stay [up to date](#) with COVID-19 vaccination to lower risk of serious COVID-19 outcomes such as hospitalization and death.

In light of COVID-19 rebound potential, take precautions to prevent further spread during the post-recovery time period.

Per CDC guidance, if COVID-19 illness recurs:

- Restart isolation (regardless of previous isolation after initial infection) and isolate again for ≥ 5 days.
 - Only end re-isolation after 5 full days if fever has resolved for 24 hours (without fever-reducing medication) and with symptom improvement.
 - Wear a mask for a total of 10 days after rebound symptoms started.

PharMerica Continues to Provide Support

PharMerica continues to support facilitating access to currently authorized COVID-19 therapies, including Paxlovid. Please reach out to your servicing Pharmacy and/or Account Manager for further information.

PharMerica, along with the writers, editors, and reviewers of this informational guide cannot be held responsible for the continued currency of information, for any errors or omissions and for any consequences arising from this guideline.