



# Department of Public Health



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Tommy Gonzalez

Dear El Paso Citizen,

We are sorry you tested positive for the virus which causes COVID-19. By getting tested, you now have valuable information which can help you protect others from getting infected and help your medical provider recommend the most appropriate treatment to help you get better. Please review the Department of Public Health and the CDC's guidelines on how long to isolate and recommendations for testing, if any, to prevent the spread of the virus to your family, friends, and coworkers, at [EPstrong.org](http://EPstrong.org), or [CDC.gov](http://CDC.gov)

In the last year, El Paso was a leading community in referring patients with COVID-19 who also met certain FDA criteria to receive monoclonal antibody treatment. This began with Bamlanivimab, later changed to REGEN-CoV, as well as to include the combination Bamlanivimab/Etesevimab. Changes in the monoclonal antibody were needed as new variants of the COVID-19 virus appeared.

In the last few weeks, the latest variant of COVID-19, Omicron, has been spreading rapidly in our community and is the likely cause of most new cases in January. The older monoclonal antibodies are not believed to be effective against Omicron. Fortunately, there is a new monoclonal antibody which is effective, Sotrovimab. As of the second week of January, we unfortunately have very limited supplies of this new medication, and not enough to treat every patient who might otherwise qualify. Nationally, the supply of Sotrovimab is highly limited, though doses should increase in the coming months. While Omicron spreads much more easily, it also results in general in less severe illness and fewer hospitalizations, particularly in people fully vaccinated and with booster shots. Speak with your healthcare provider to determine if you should receive Sotrovimab.

There are also two new oral treatments for COVID-19 which are just arriving in some El Paso Pharmacies. Paxlovid or Mulpupiravir are the two drugs which when taken early, can also reduce the likelihood of ending up in the hospital. These medications have specific prescribing guidelines and are not appropriate for all patients, and again, are in very short supply. Your healthcare provider can also advise you if they are right for you.

### Who is this treatment recommended for?

The new monoclonal antibody and the oral medications are approved under emergency use authorization by the FDA only for some patients with COVID-19.





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*During this period of limited supplies, we recommend that only those people at the greatest risk of becoming seriously ill be sent for the Sotrovimab infusion, or given a prescription for one of the new oral pills. Most individuals, particularly those under age 50 in general good health, with prior full vaccination will not need either treatment.*

### What if I might qualify?

Treatment with any of these medications is only approved for people who are well enough to stay home and within about a week or less of first symptoms of COVID-19. Proof of a positive COVID test is needed. Please contact your healthcare provider to discuss if it is appropriate for you to receive one of these treatments. If you cannot see your healthcare provider within a reasonable amount of time or do not have a healthcare provider, there are multiple options for you to be screened in El Paso. For other screening options, please visit: <http://epstrong.org/treatment.php>

### Where is the monoclonal antibody Sotrovimab treatment given?

#### There are two options for Sotrovimab infusion treatment:

- Treatment is being given at The Hospitals of Providence (THOP): Memorial Campus at 2001 N. Oregon. You must have an appointment for treatment, which can be obtained by getting a screening from your healthcare provider. If you are eligible to receive the treatment, a referral will be sent to THOP Memorial and they will reach out to you to schedule an appointment. For additional information, you may also visit [epstrong.org](http://epstrong.org) under the treatment tab.
- Treatment is also being given at the COVID Response Clinic located at 9341 Alameda in partnership with the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Regional Infusion Center (RIC). It operates 7 days a week from 7:00am to 7:00pm with appointments at 8:00am, 12:00pm and 4:00pm. The process to sign up is as follows:

#### With a Medical Provider:

- Medical Provider will ensure patient meets criteria for an infusion or for a prescription for the oral medication and that treatment is sought as soon as possible after a confirmed COVID-19 positive test result and within 10 days of symptom onset.
- Medical provider will complete patient screening/referral infusion order
- Once a provider submits a referral and order set, the infusion management system auto-generates and sends an appointment date and time directly to the





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patient's email address that was indicated in the Online referral.

- The appointment will be for the next available time slot at the COVID-19 Response Clinic DSHS/RIC at 9341 Alameda.
- Should a patient be unable to travel to the COVID Response Clinic/DSHS RIC, the referring provider can request a Mobile Infusion Team be dispatched to the patient's address. A Mobil Infusion Team is usually dispatched within 24 hours depending on demand.

### Without a Medical Provider:

#### Texas Infusion Hotline for General Information and Assistance: 1-800-742-5990

- The DSHS Infusion Hotline is available 24/7 to answer questions.
- For patients who cannot access a medical provider and require a Mobile Infusion Team, callers can be connected with a medical provider from 7:00am CST to 7:00 pm CST for telemedicine services.

### Is there a cost for treatment?

The treatment is free of charge and patients do NOT have to pay anything out of pocket to receive the *Sotrovimab* infusion therapy. However, there may be an associated cost for the screening at participating locations.

### How soon can I receive the infusion treatment?

The timing to receive his treatment is extremely important. The earlier you receive the medication, the better the results. Please speak with your healthcare provider about COVID-19 treatment options, to see if you might qualify to receive the *Sotrovimab* infusion or the oral medication Also please observe the recommended isolation period because that is the best way to slow down the pandemic and to keep everyone safe and healthy.

We wish you a speedy recovery!

Sincerely,

Edward A. Michelson, MD  
Chief Medical Officer  
El Paso InfusionCenter Initiative (EPIC)

Angela Mora, Director – City of El  
Department of Public Health

### Angela Mora – Director

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