



COVID-19 convalescent plasma treatment factsheet

COVID-19 convalescent plasma is used to treat COVID-19. It is important to talk to your health care provider about this treatment. Remdesivir is the only U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved product to treat COVID-19. Transfusion of COVID-19 convalescent plasma may help patients hospitalized with COVID-19. COVID-19 convalescent plasma is an investigational product by the FDA and requires your informed consent.

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is another name given to the new coronavirus identified in the year 2019. It is also known as the SARS-CoV-2 virus. This new virus has caused a worldwide pandemic with many patients developing severe respiratory illness and other serious conditions. You can get COVID-19 through contact with another person who has the virus.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Common symptoms are fever, cough, and shortness of breath, which may appear 2-14 days after exposure. COVID-19 illnesses have ranged from very mild (including some with no reported symptoms) to severe, including illness resulting in death. Older people and people of all ages with severe chronic medical conditions like heart disease, lung disease, and diabetes, for example, may be at higher risk of being hospitalized for COVID-19.

What is COVID-19 convalescent plasma?

The blood from people who recover from COVID-19 contains antibodies, which can help fight the virus. Patients with COVID-19 may improve faster if they get plasma from those who have recovered from COVID-19.

How is COVID-19 convalescent plasma given?

You will be given plasma, the liquid portion of the blood, from a person who has recovered from COVID-19. It will be given into a vein using a sterile single use needle and will be given over one to two hours. About 200 mL (a little less than 8 ounces) of plasma will be given in the first infusion. Additional infusions of plasma may be given throughout your hospital stay.

What are the possible benefits of getting COVID-19 convalescent plasma?

This treatment might help you recover from the disease faster.

What are the common an/or possible side effects (risks) of COVID-19 convalescent plasma?

A transfusion can cause reactions such as allergic reactions, fluid overload, or lung damage with breathing difficulty, cardiac (heart) rhythm irregularities, and blood clotting. As with any blood product, there is a risk of transfusion-transmitted infection including HIV, hepatitis B, and hepatitis C. The risk of these infections is very low. You may have other side effects that are not known at this time and may include serious injury or pain, disability, or death.

Should not get COVID-19 convalescent plasma?

Discuss with your health care provider if you had any reactions to plasma products or other blood products in the past.

What if I am pregnant or breastfeeding?

The safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 convalescent plasma in pregnancy and nursing mothers has not been evaluated. If you are pregnant or breastfeeding, please talk with your health care provider to decide if you should receive COVID-19 convalescent plasma.

How do I report any side effects?

After receiving COVID-19 convalescent plasma, if you experience any side effects, please contact your health care provider. When you are reporting a side effect, you should tell them that you received COVID-19 convalescent plasma.

Are there alternatives to COVID-19 convalescent plasma?

Currently, only the antiviral Remdesivir is approved by the FDA to prevent or treat COVID-19 infection. Like convalescent plasma, FDA may allow for the emergency use of other medicines to treat people in the hospital with COVID-19. Your health care provider may talk to you about clinical trials you may be eligible for. It is your choice to be treated or not to be treated with COVID-19 convalescent plasma. You can decide not to get it or stop it at any time. You may be given other treatments that may include oxygen, fluids, and medications depending on your condition and determined by your doctor.

Can I learn for information?

1. Ask your health care provider.
2. Contact your local or state public health department.