What's New
Statement on Baricitinib EUA
Statement on Casirivimab Plus Imdevimab EUA
Statement on Bamlanivimab EUA
Introduction
Overview +
Critical Care +
Therapeutic Management
Antiviral Therapy +
Immune-Based Therapy +
Adjunctive Therapy +
Concomitant Medications
Special Populations +
Panel Roster
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Introduction

Last Updated: November 3, 2020

The COVID-19 Treatment Guidelines have been developed to inform clinicians how to care for patients with COVID-19. Because clinical information about the optimal management of COVID-19 is evolving quickly, these Guidelines will be updated frequently as published data and other authoritative information become available.

The recommendations in these Guidelines are based on scientific evidence and expert opinion. Each recommendation includes two ratings: a letter (**A**, **B**, or **C**) that indicates the strength of the recommendation and a Roman numeral (**I**, **II**, or **III**) that indicates the quality of the evidence that supports the recommendation (see Table 1).

Panel Composition

Members of the COVID-19 Treatment Guidelines Panel (the Panel) were appointed by the Panel co-chairs based on their clinical experience and expertise in patient management, translational and clinical science, and/or development of treatment guidelines. Panel members include representatives from federal agencies, health care and academic organizations, and professional societies. Federal agencies and professional societies represented on the Panel include:

- American Association of Critical-Care Nurses
- American Association for Respiratory Care
- American College of Chest Physicians
- American College of Emergency Physicians
- American Society of Hematology
- American Thoracic Society
- Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Department of Defense
- Department of Veterans Affairs
- Food and Drug Administration
- Infectious Diseases Society of America
- National Institutes of Health
- Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society
- Society of Critical Care Medicine
- Society of Infectious Diseases Pharmacists

The inclusion of representatives from professional societies does not imply that their societies have endorsed all elements of this document.

The names, affiliations, and financial disclosures of the Panel members and ex officio members, as well as members of the support team, are provided in the Panel Roster and Financial Disclosure sections of the Guidelines.

Development of the Guidelines

Each section of the Guidelines is developed by a working group of Panel members with expertise in the area addressed in the section. Each working group is responsible for identifying relevant information and published scientific literature and for conducting a systematic, comprehensive review of that information and literature. The working groups propose updates to the Guidelines based on the latest published research findings and evolving clinical information.

New Guidelines sections and recommendations are reviewed and voted on by the voting members of the Panel. To be included in the Guidelines, a recommendation must be endorsed by a majority of Panel members. Updates to existing sections that do not affect the rated recommendations are approved by Panel co-chairs without a Panel vote. Panel members are required to keep all Panel deliberations and unpublished data considered during the development of the Guidelines confidential.

Method of Synthesizing Data and Formulating Recommendations

The working groups critically review and synthesize the available data to develop recommendations. Aspects of the data that are considered include, but are not limited to, the source of the data, the type of study (e.g., case series, prospective or retrospective cohorts, randomized controlled trial), the quality and suitability of the methods, the number of participants, and the effect sizes observed. Each recommendation is assigned two ratings according to the scheme presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Recommendation Rating Scheme

Strength of Recommendation	Quality of Evidence for Recommendation
A: Strong recommendation for the statement **B:** Moderate recommendation for the statement **C:** Optional recommendation for the statement	**I:** One or more randomized trials with clinical outcomes and/or validated laboratory endpoints **II:** One or more well-designed, nonrandomized trials or observational cohort studies **III:** Expert opinion

To develop the recommendations in these Guidelines, the Panel uses data from the rapidly growing body of published research on COVID-19. The Panel also relies heavily on experience with other diseases, supplemented with evolving personal clinical experience with COVID-19.

In general, the recommendations in these Guidelines fall into the following categories:

- **The Panel recommends using [blank] for the treatment of COVID-19 (rating).** Recommendations in this category are based on evidence from clinical trials or large cohort studies that demonstrate clinical or virologic efficacy in patients with COVID-19, with the potential benefits outweighing the potential risks.
- **There are insufficient data for the Panel to recommend either for or against the use of [blank] for the treatment of COVID-19 (no rating).** This statement is not a recommendation; it is used in cases when there are insufficient data to make a recommendation.
- **The Panel recommends against the use of [blank] for the treatment of COVID-19, except in a clinical trial (rating).** This recommendation is for an intervention that has not clearly demonstrated efficacy in the treatment of COVID-19 and/or has potential safety concerns. More clinical trials are needed to further define the role of the intervention.
- **The Panel recommends against the use of [blank] for the treatment of COVID-19 (rating).** This recommendation is used in cases when the available data clearly show a safety concern and/or the data show no benefit for the treatment of COVID-19.