

Atrium Health, NCDHHS and HHS partner to expand access to monoclonal antibody therapy to treat COVID-19 patients

Atrium Health first hospital system in North Carolina to join national initiative

CHARLOTTE, N.C., August 25, 2021 – Atrium Health, in partnership with the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), announced today that it has expanded access to out-patient COVID-19 monoclonal antibody (mAb) treatments and is now administering the therapy at three of its locations. For people who have recently tested positive for the COVID-19 virus who are at high risk for developing severe COVID-19 illness, or those who are unvaccinated and have been exposed to someone who has tested positive, this promising mAb treatment has been shown to help prevent progression of the disease that might otherwise require hospitalization.

If administered within the first week of COVID-19 symptoms onset, the one-time therapy is highly effective in neutralizing the virus and preventing symptoms from worsening. The treatment is administered through intravenous infusion, delivering medication directly into a patient's bloodstream.

“As an organization dedicated to shaping health outcomes through innovative research, education and compassionate patient care, we are honored to be able to offer three treatment facilities for monoclonal antibody infusions to treat COVID-19,” said Dr. Lisa Davidson, an infectious disease physician at Atrium Health in Charlotte.

In response to the growing COVID-19 case rates and the rapid spread of the Delta variant, Atrium Health has expanded access to the mAb infusion at multiple locations across the Charlotte region increasing the number of patients who can be treated each day. As part of this initiative, Atrium Health plans to more than double capacity with the goal to continue to further expand treatment access as demand warrants.

“As Delta variant cases continue to rise in North Carolina, this treatment option offers a solution to help care for COVID-positive patients while also preventing the spread of the virus, although vaccination is still the best way to curb further spread of COVID-19,” Davidson added.

On March 17, 2021, HHS announced it was investing \$150 million to increase access to mAb therapy for high-risk patients in underserved and disadvantaged communities across the country. With support from KPMG LLP, HHS is developing new prototype models for expanding access to mAb treatment and leveraging an existing network of health care partners who have the experience and equipment necessary to provide the therapy.

Atrium Health is the first hospital system in North Carolina to join the Crush COVID national initiative and joins a growing list of mAb therapy providers as part of the federal effort to help curb COVID-19.

The therapy is the first COVID-19 treatment granted emergency use authorization by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for outpatient use. A Phase 3 clinical trial showed that the antibody therapy reduced the risk of hospitalization or death by 70%, or more, in patients who received the drug intravenously, compared to those who received a placebo.

“Monoclonal antibody therapy is another tool to help save lives and preserve hospital capacity in your local community,” said Dr. Elizabeth Tilson, state health director and chief medical officer of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. “Of course, vaccines remain the best protection from COVID-19 related hospitalization and death and in addition to saving lives and hospital capacity, they are also our fastest way to end this pandemic.”

The mAbs treatment for eligible patients will be available Monday through Friday between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. at the Atrium Health locations, with expansion efforts underway to provide broader access and reach. To confirm eligibility for the treatment, patients should contact their Atrium Health primary care physician or call 704-468-8888. There is no out-of-pocket cost to the patient for the medicine itself and treatment is offered regardless of immigration status or health insurance.

In addition to the Atrium Health locations in North Carolina, more than 45 infusion sites have now been established or expanded under this initiative in California, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, South Carolina, Texas and West Virginia.

About Atrium Health

[Atrium Health](#) is a nationally recognized leader in shaping health outcomes through innovative research, education and compassionate patient care. Atrium Health is an integrated, nonprofit health system with nearly 70,000 teammates serving patients at 40 hospitals and more than 1,400 care locations. It provides care under the [Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist](#) name in the Winston-Salem, North Carolina, region, as well as [Atrium Health Navicent](#) and [Floyd](#) in Georgia and Alabama. A recognized leader in experiential medical education and groundbreaking research, [Wake Forest School of Medicine](#) is the academic core of the enterprise. Atrium Health is renowned for its top-ranked pediatric, cancer and heart care, as well as organ transplants, burn treatments and specialized musculoskeletal programs. It is also a leading-edge innovator in virtual care and mobile medicine, providing care close to home and in the home. Ranked among U.S. News & World Report’s Best Hospitals in eight pediatric specialties, Atrium Health has also received the American Hospital Association’s Quest for Quality Prize and its 2021 Carolyn Boone Lewis Equity of Care Award, as well as the 2020 Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Health Equity Award for its efforts to reduce racial and ethnic disparities in care. With a commitment to every community it serves, Atrium Health seeks to improve health, elevate hope and advance healing – for all, providing more than \$2 billion per year in free and uncompensated care and other community benefits.

About Crush COVID

A treatment for COVID-19 is here and is available in every state at hundreds of locations across the country. With the help of KPMG, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), state and local health departments and local hospitals and health clinics, eligible patients will have increased access to monoclonal antibody therapy (mAb) treatment in a growing number of underserved and disadvantaged communities through this initiative. Authorized by the FDA, mAb are available to high-risk patients who have either tested positive for COVID-19 or are unvaccinated and have been exposed to the virus. To learn more about eligibility and find a treatment location near you, visit <https://crushcovid.com>.

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