

For the Public

MANAGING COVID-19 AT HOME:

What medicines to take (and not take)



What medicines do patients with COVID-19 need to take at home?



Follow Health Care Provider instructions: It is very important to strictly follow your health care provider's instructions for any medication during COVID-19.



Fever: If you have fever, muscle pain or headache, take paracetamol. Take advice from a health care provider on the dose and how often to take it. The usual dose for adults is one or two 500mg tablets, or one 650mg tablet, up to 4 times in 24 hours. Always leave at least 4 hours between doses. If you are under 18 years old or you weigh less than 50 kg then ask your health care provider for a maximum dose. If fever continues despite this, use a cold wet cloth on your forehead.



If your oxygen level is 90% or more, but less than 94%, Consult a health care provider or seek hospital care. Your health care provider may prescribe steroids. If so, follow their instructions strictly. Do not self-medicate.



If your oxygen level is less than 90%, this is considered severe COVID-19. Consult a health care provider or seek hospital admission immediately. Use oxygen and take steroids as prescribed by your health care provider if you can't get to hospital immediately.



Secondary infection: Sometimes severe COVID-19 can lead to secondary bacterial infection, and in some cases, fungal infection. If this happens, your health care provider may suggest antibiotics or antifungals. Please follow the instructions strictly and do not self-medicate.

What to avoid



Do not self-medicate with antibiotics. COVID-19 is caused by a virus, and antibiotics have no effect on a virus.



Do not self-medicate on steroids: overuse of steroids can have serious and potentially life-threatening consequences, including mucormycosis (“black fungus”) infection.



Do not self-medicate with other medicines without them being advised by a health care provider.



WHO recommends against the use of **hydroxychloroquine, lopinavir/ritonavir.**



WHO has made a **conditional recommendation against the use of remdesivir** in hospitalized COVID-19 patients of any severity.



WHO advises that **ivermectin only be used to treat COVID-19 within clinical trials.**

Steroids that are usually prescribed/advised by health care providers include dexamethasone, methylprednisolone, prednisone and hydrocortisone.