

Friends, When my colleague's mom, a front line health worker, was diagnosed with COVID-19, she was able to go on a regimen of monoclonal antibodies—one of the therapeutics available to treat hospitalized patients with COVID-19. And gratefully she is on the mend.

We thought it might be helpful to review the current treatments available to treat those infected with the virus—and why there is an [urgent national call for plasma donations](#).

Helpful overviews include [FDA Combating Covid-19 with Therapeutics](#) and a [video interview](#) with the Operation Warp Speed lead on types of treatments and ongoing research.

- **What treatments for COVID-19 are approved for use?** As of Nov. 23, the FDA has approved one treatment for COVID-19, the antiviral drug [Veklury \(remdesivir\)](#), for use in adult and pediatric patients 12 years of age and older. Five other treatments are [currently authorized for Emergency Use](#) - including [convalescent plasma](#) and [monoclonal antibodies](#).
- **What's the difference between convalescent plasma and monoclonal antibodies?** Basically, monoclonal antibodies are *laboratory-made proteins* that mimic the immune system's ability to fight off harmful antigens such as viruses. Convalescent plasma is *from patients* who have already recovered from COVID-19 and may contain antibodies against the virus.
- **What other treatments are in development?** FDA created the [Coronavirus Treatment Acceleration Program \(CTAP\)](#) to expedite the development of therapeutics. As of Oct. 31, there were more than 370 active trials and more than 560 development programs for therapeutic agents in the planning stages. Visit the [CTAP's dashboard](#).
- **Why is there a national call for plasma?** As COVID-19 infections spike nationwide, the demand for convalescent plasma is outpacing donations. Americans who have recovered from COVID-19 in the last three months can donate now. Visit local blood collection center, [American Red Cross](#) or [America's Blood Centers](#) or visit [TheFightIsInUs.org](#) to become a donor.

## HHS Announcements & News

### [Vaccine Development and Distribution Update](#)

- CDC's [Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices](#) (ACIP) met last week and voted on general recommendations for how to prioritize vaccine distribution when supply is initially scarce.

- CDC then [published the MMWR](#) with their vaccine priority recommendations to jurisdictions. Bottom line: The 24 million vaccines will first take care of the 21 million healthcare workers and then approximately 3 million seniors and frail living in long term care facilities second.
- The [64 jurisdictions](#) are working on distribution plans and will use these recommendations and their own best judgment to develop allocation plans based on what makes sense in their circumstances.
- Thurs., Dec. 10, FDA's Vaccine Advisory Board will meet to discuss an [emergency use authorization](#) request for Pfizer's vaccine.
- Tues., Dec. 17, FDA's Vaccine Advisory board will review the clinical trial data submitted by Moderna for emergency authorization of its vaccine.
- **What can we do?** When vaccines become available, it'll be our turn to get vaccinated and encourage our communities to do the same. Read and share the [CDC's website](#) and videos with quick things to know about [the science of vaccines](#).

### [HHS Announces New Action Plan and Surgeon General's Call to Action to Improve Maternal Health](#)

HHS released a new comprehensive [HHS Action Plan](#) and the U.S. Surgeon General issued a complementary [Call to Action to Improve Maternal Health](#) to reduce maternal deaths and disparities that put women at risk before, during, and after pregnancy.

HHS also announced a [public-private partnership](#) with the March of Dimes to support these initiatives.

### [New Study on First U.S. Cases of COVID-19](#)

CDC highlighted a study that shows that the virus that causes COVID-19 may have been in the U.S. as early as mid-December 2019, a month before the first confirmed case, based on antibodies found in donated blood.

### [COVID-19 Infection, Hospitalizations, and Deaths Among Persons Hispanic/Latinos](#)

CDC released an MMWR for the period between March and Oct. in Denver, Colorado. The majority of adult COVID-19 cases (55%), hospitalizations (62%), and deaths (51%) were among Hispanic adults, double the proportion of Hispanic adults (24.9%).

## E-learning and Engagement Opportunities

### [Spirituality and Community-wide Crisis: Building Systems to Support Connection and Recovery](#)

Tues., Dec. 8, 2020. Register [here](#).

This 6<sup>th</sup> and final webinar in The Partnership Center's webinar series will highlight examples of community programs that effectively engage spirituality and spiritual communities to support people affected by mental illness. View the entire series [here](#).

### [COVID-19 Emergency Webinar for Community Based Organizations: Vaccines](#)

Wed., Dec. 16, 2020. 3:00 p.m. ET. Register [here](#).

CDC Foundation President and CEO Dr. Judy Monroe, CDC Principal Deputy Director Dr. Anne Schuchat will discuss the current COVID-19 response, including the latest information about vaccines, and vaccine distribution plans. A local expert will also speak about vaccine-related challenges and opportunities.

**[Register now! USDA Faith Fellowship and Food Security Virtual Convening](#)**

USDA will host a Faith and Opportunity Fellowship convening bringing together faith leaders, faith-based organizations, and houses of worship to engage with peers, discuss common challenges, and hear best practices related to food security and community food system resilience. Register [here](#). Reach out to [alex.cordova@usda.gov](mailto:alex.cordova@usda.gov) with any questions.

**GRANTS and AWARDS**

Please review the Dec. 2 This Week issue for the current awards and grant opportunities.

As always, we remain thankful for your steadfast and courageous leadership.

