

What to expect during a COVID-19 antibody treatment



Antibody treatment is a one-time infusion for people recently diagnosed with COVID-19 who are at high risk to get very sick from COVID-19 because of age or certain health conditions. **In this easy-to-read guide, you'll learn what to expect before, during, and after treatment.**

What are the side effects?¹

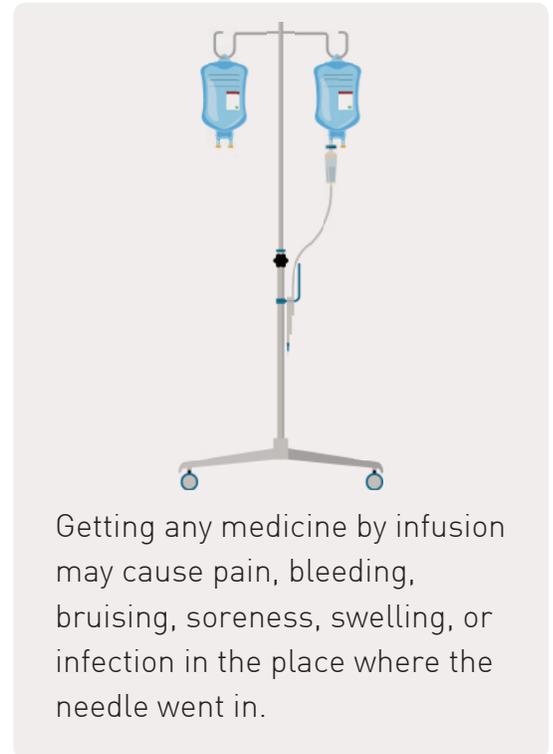
Side effects can range from mild to serious. **Tell your doctor or nurse right away** if you have any of these side effects during or after your infusion, as they may be signs of a serious or life-threatening allergic reaction:

- Fever, chills, headache, or muscle aches
- Nausea (upset stomach)
- Wheezing or shortness of breath (trouble breathing)
- Dizziness or low blood pressure
- Itching, rash, or hives
- Swollen lips, face, or throat
- Feeling weak, confused, or tired

These are not all the possible side effects of antibody treatments. Serious and unexpected side effects may happen.

It's possible that an antibody treatment could make it harder for your body to fight off a future COVID-19 infection, and it could make a future COVID-19 vaccine less effective for you. Scientists haven't done specific studies to address these possible risks.

After antibody treatment, some people had new or worsening COVID-19 symptoms — including fever, trouble breathing, fast or slow heartbeat, or feeling weak, confused, or tired. Some people had to go to the hospital because of these serious symptoms. Scientists can't be sure if the treatment caused the serious symptoms or if they happened because of COVID-19.



Getting any medicine by infusion may cause pain, bleeding, bruising, soreness, swelling, or infection in the place where the needle went in.



If you have any new symptoms or side effects during or after your infusion, tell your doctor right away. You can also report side effects at www.fda.gov/medwatch or by calling 1-800-FDA-1088.

How can I get ready for my appointment?^{2,3}

- Get a good night's sleep, drink plenty of water, and eat a light meal
- Wear warm, comfortable clothes, including a shirt with sleeves you can roll up over your elbows — and a mask to help prevent the spread of COVID-19
- Bring an extra sweater or blanket, water and snacks, and things to keep you busy (like books, magazines, or a tablet or phone)
- Ask the clinic staff what to do when you get there — for example, they may ask you to call instead of coming into the waiting room
- Plan for the appointment to take about 2 hours



What is it like to get the infusion?¹

When you get to the clinic, a nurse will show you to a chair where you can sit comfortably. The nurse will clean your arm with a special liquid that kills germs. Then they'll insert a small needle into a vein and start the flow of medicine.

You may feel a pinch or sting when the needle first goes in, but the feeling often goes away after a few seconds. If you feel any pain during the infusion, tell the nurse right away.

Once the infusion starts, it may last longer than 1 hour or be as short as 20 minutes. After the infusion, you'll need to stay for about an hour so the nurse can make sure you're feeling okay.

What happens after my appointment?¹

Your doctor or the clinic staff will keep checking with you to see how you feel and which COVID-19 symptoms you have. Even after treatment, you could still pass COVID-19 to other people. It's important to stay away from other people for as long as your doctor tells you to.

If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to ask the clinic staff. It's their job to explain what's happening and make sure you feel comfortable.



References

¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: [combatcovid.hhs.gov/i-have-covid-19-now/monoclonal-antibodies-high-risk-covid-19-positive-patients](https://www.combatcovid.hhs.gov/i-have-covid-19-now/monoclonal-antibodies-high-risk-covid-19-positive-patients)

² Infusion Access Foundation: infusioncenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Preparing-for-a-COVID-19-Antibody-Infusion_1125-1.pdf

³ National Infusion Center Association: infusioncenter.org/how-to-prepare-for-your-infusion/