



COVID Assessment Center Referral Process & Expectations

St Mary's General Hospital (SMGH), Kitchener is one of the sites, designated by Ontario Health to receive and distribute Nirmatrelvir/Ritonavir (Paxlovid®).

Paxlovid® is currently being offered to patients at higher risk of severe COVID-19 (proven by PCR or a provider-administered rapid test), who are not yet on supplemental oxygen, and who are within 5 days of symptom onset.

Current guidance documents:

"Clinical Practice Guideline Summary: Recommended Drugs and Biologics in Adult Patients with COVID-19. (Version 10.0)"
<https://covid19-sciencetable.ca/sciencebrief/#infectious-diseases-clinical-care>.

"Nirmatrelvir/Ritonavir (Paxlovid): What Prescribers and Pharmacists Need to Know (updated Feb 23, 2022)" <https://covid19-sciencetable.ca/sciencebrief/nirmatrelvir-ritonavir-paxlovid-what-prescribers-and-pharmacists-need-to-know/>.

To allow Paxlovid® referrals to be received and processed in a timely manner, all referring physicians are encouraged to read, understand and complete the referral form in its entirety.

Checklist for referrals:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Patient information incl. contact number	<input type="checkbox"/> Primary care Physician details	<input type="checkbox"/> Exclusion criteria review
Inclusion criteria review:	Drug Interaction Assessment	Lab Assessment
<input type="checkbox"/> COVID test: positive / pending (RAT-healthcare professional administered, PCR, IDNOW) <input type="checkbox"/> Date of symptom onset: ≤ 5 days <input type="checkbox"/> Vaccination status <input type="checkbox"/> Risk factors review	<input type="checkbox"/> Best possible medication list attached <input type="checkbox"/> Community Pharmacy name and contact no.	<input type="checkbox"/> Recent blood work to include renal and hepatic profile

[Please access the most up to date referral form from the SMGH website.](#)

Frequently asked questions (FAQs):

If my patient tests positive for SARS-CoV-2 using a home-administered RAT, do I need to send the patient for further confirmation testing?

Yes. Antiviral eligibility is only valid if patient tests positive for SAR-CoV-2 on either a **PCR** test or a **RAT-healthcare-professional administered** or **IDNOW** (rapid molecular test). It is recommended that prior to completing the referral form, the patient is tested using one of these confirmation tests.

For health care administered testing, please refer your patient to the nearest COVID assessment center.

For a list of centers, please see: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/assessment-centre-locations>

If my patient is displaying symptoms of COVID-19, do I need to test for confirmation?

Yes, please sent to the nearest COVID assessment center for testing, even if a home based RAT is negative.

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If the confirmation test is 'pending', can I complete and fax the referral form in the meantime?

Yes. You can fax the referral form to SMGH CAC. CAC will await confirmation results before proceeding further.

When should I order additional bloodwork prior to referring for Paxlovid® therapy?

If there is no bloodwork available, then renal and hepatic function tests are necessary. If bloodwork (renal and hepatic function) was ordered and recorded in the previous 6 months, this may be sufficient for referral unless any changes are expected. In this case, repeat blood work is necessary.

What happens after the referral is made?

Once a referral is received, SMGH CAC will assume patient-care. The primary care physician (PCP) will be contacted only if further information/clarification is required. Once the patient is discharged from SMGH CAC, a follow-up care note will be faxed to PCP.

The patient does not necessarily need to attend the SMGH CAC provided all the necessary information required for an assessment is completed on the referral form. If further clarification is required, CAC will contact the patient. The expectation is that the referring physician will have completed or arranged for a physical assessment, whether virtual or in-person.

The COVID assessment team will review the referral to ensure the patient meets eligibility criteria.

A pharmacist will conduct an extensive medication review. Paxlovid® has the potential to interact with many medications, increasing/decreasing the therapeutic effects of many medications in the body, leading to undesirable side effects and potential therapy failures. Paxlovid® is contraindicated in patients who are taking certain medications that are dependent on CYP3A4-mediated metabolism and/or are CYP3A-inducing. For complex interactions, consultation with a pharmacist experienced in managing ritonavir-related interactions is recommended.

Special Populations:

1. Can I refer a patient under the age of 18 for Paxlovid® therapy?

Evidence for the safety of Sotrovimab and Paxlovid® in children < 18 years of age is limited. Antiviral therapy should only be considered in exceptional circumstances, on a case-by-case basis and should involve consultation with a Pediatric Infectious disease specialist as well as the team primarily responsible for the child's care.

2. My patient is taking immunosuppressive therapy. Does that mean he/she will automatically qualify?

A team of healthcare professionals at CAC will assess the referral form and all the information provided and decide on suitable outcomes.

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3. Can I refer for Sotrovimab?

For Sotrovimab availability and criteria for use, please contact St. Joseph's Healthcare, Hamilton or follow this link: <https://www.stjoes.ca/coronavirus/st.-joseph%E2%80%99s-healthcare-hamilton-mono-clonal-antibody-clinic>

Regional sites offering Sotrovimab and Paxlovid (walk-in not accepted):

- Health Sciences North – COVID Assessment Centre, 2050 Regent St, Sudbury, Fax: 705-523-4464
- Humber River Hospital – Finch RCC, COVID Assessment Centre, 2111 Finch Ave W, North York, Email: CACfinch@hrh.ca
- The Ottawa Hospital – Civic Campus, 1052 Carling Ave, Ottawa, Fax: 613-739-6751
- Scarborough Health Network – Centenary Hospital, 2867 Ellesmere Rd, Scarborough, Fax: 416-281-7384
- St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton – ED Entrance, 50 Charlton Ave East, Hamilton, Fax: 905-522-4469
- Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre – 984 Oliver Rd, Suite 101, Thunder Bay, Fax: 807-623-6631, Tele: 807-935-8101
- Windsor Regional Hospital – 1030 Ouellette Ave, Windsor, Email: WRHmAbclinic@wrh.on.ca