Te Whatu Ora
Health New Zealand
Te Matau a Māui Hawke's Bay

HEALTH HAWKE'S BAY
Te Oranga o Te Matau-a-Māui

Best Practice Message

Updated 18th July 2022

Focus on Efficacy: Lagevrio™ (molnupiravir) v3

Practice changing moments

- Molnupiravir (Lagevrio™) is an oral antiviral treatment available for COVID-19.
- PHARMAC have strict access criteria around prescribing Lagevrio™.
- Lagevrio™ is **NOT** as effective as Paxlovid™ and should be reserved for patients for whom Paxlovid™ is not appropriate. Remdesivir is more effective, see Health Pathways for guidance.
- There is no dose adjustment required for Lagevrio™ based on renal function or concomitant medications.

Background

Molnupiravir (Lagevrio™) is a nucleoside analogue which causes catastrophic errors in viral replication. Molnupiravir is less effective than Paxlovid™ and remdesivir in preventing hospitalisations. It is indicated for treatment of acute symptomatic COVID-19 in adults 18 years of age and older where Paxlovid™ is contraindicated, who do not require initiation of supplemental oxygen due to COVID-19. It reduces the risk of hospitalisation (NNT 34) for those who have a higher risk of hospitalisation or becoming seriously unwell. Treatment should be initiate as early as possible and within five days of symptom onset.

Remdesivir is an effective agent where Paxlovid™ is contraindicated, however community use is limited by IV administration and availability. See Hawke's Bay Community Health Pathways for guidance on remdesivir.

Lagevrio™ Pharmacies

Lagevrio™ is available from selected pharmacies to allow close monitoring of stock levels. Pharmacies are funded for clinical support and education; patients will receive this service for free. To enable pharmacists to complete the clinical review please supply key information on the prescription.

Key information to be added to prescription:

- Annotation of endorsement: Patient meets access criteria
- Date of symptom onset (Day zero)
- Prescriber contact phone number for any pharmacist queries.

Selected Pharmacies to send e-prescriptions:

- Ahuriri Pharmacy
- Andrew Spence Pharmacy
- Bay Plaza Pharmacy
- Clive Pharmacy
- Dentons Peak Pharmacy
- Flaxmere Pharmacy
- Gilmours Pharmacy
- Glenn's Pharmacy
- Greenmeadows Pharmacy
- Mahora Pharmacy
- Maraenui Pharmacy
- Taiwhenua Pharmacy
- Tamatea Pharmacy
- The Pharmacy @ The Hastings Health Centre
- Unichem Munroe Street Pharmacy
- Unichem Russell Street
- Unichem Stortford Lodge Pharmacy
- Unichem Taradale
- Unichem Waipukurau
- Wairoa Pharmacy
- Napier Pharmacy (only for patients living rurally, who need it afterhours when other pharmacies are closed)

Opening hours for the various pharmacies can be found at: Find a pharmacy - Hawkes Bay – Our Health (ourhealthhb.nz)

What is the process?

1. Ensure that the patient meets access criteria

Pharmac has specific eligibility for patients to access Lagevrio™. This criteria is identical to Paxlovid™. Lagevrio™ should be reserved for patients for whom Paxlovid™ is contraindicated
To be eligible for a Prescription the client (ages 18 years or older) needs to meet the following criteria:

1. Confirmed (or probable) symptomatic COVID-19

AND

2. Symptom onset of <5 days

AND

3. Patient doesn't require supplemental oxygen to maintain O2 Sat >93% (or baseline in patients with chronic resting hypoxia)

AND

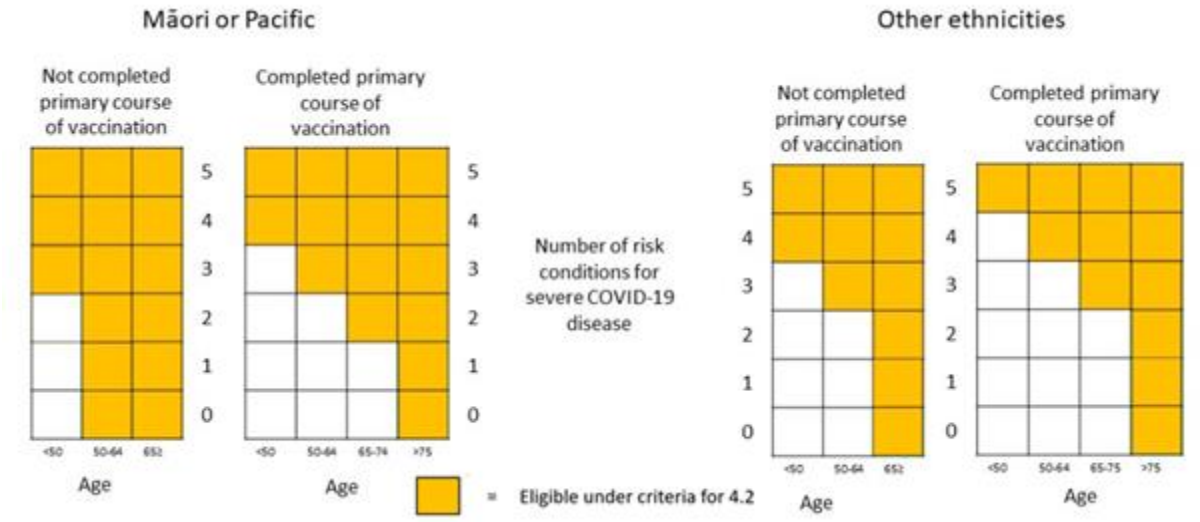
4. Either:
    a. Immunocompromised*, and not expected to reliably mount an adequate immune response to COVID-19 vaccination or SARS-CoV-2 infection, regardless of vaccination status; or
    b. **Patient has Down syndrome**; or
    c. **Patient has Sickle cell disease**; or
    d. **Patient has had a previous admission to ICU directly as a result of COVID-19**; or
    e. **Patient is 75 years or older**; or
    f. **Patient meets high risk criteria as per below table**:

5 of the following for Patients <50	4 of the following for Patients 50-64	3 of the following for Patients ≥65
○ Chronic air/lung disease ○ Serious heart disease (CHF, CAD, RHD, Congenital disorders) ○ Uncontrolled hypertension ○ Chronic neurological or neuromuscular disease ○ Uncontrolled Diabetes ○ CKD ○ Liver disease (cirrhosis) ○ Haematological disorders ○ Severe mental illness ○ Active cancer ○ BMI >35 ○ Māori or Pacific ethnicity ○ Unvaccinated (**N.B. If the patient is aged >50 for Maori or Pasifika; or ≥65 for other ethnicities this qualifies patient for treatment irrespective of other conditions**)		

AND
Not to be used with other COVID-19 Antiviral treatments

* As per Ministry of Health criteria of 'severe immunocompromise' for third primary dose

Updated heatmap to identify patients eligible for antiviral Covid treatment. Adapted from PHARMAC website. Original available here



2. Check for contraindications

Review suitability of the therapeutic, specifically any contraindications and whether the patient wishes for active intervention. Renal and liver disease are not contraindications for molnupiravir treatment.

Contraindications:

- Hypersensitivity to molnupiravir or excipients.
- Pregnancy – avoid. No history in humans however toxicity found in animal studies.
- Breastfeeding – Not recommended during treatment and for 4 days after last dose taken

Refer to the Lagevrio™ Medsafe data sheet for a full description of contraindications.

Additional precautions:

- Advise patients at risk of conceiving to use contraception during and for the 7 days following treatment.

- Warn breastfeeding patients that the effects of on Lagevrio™ the breastfed infant are not known and they should therefore avoid breastfeeding during and for the 4 days following treatment.

Side-effects:

- Common side effects of Lagevrio™ are generally mild and include nausea, diarrhoea, dizziness and headache.
- Less commonly rash and urticaria have been reported.

Advise patient to contact the prescriber or pharmacy if they experience adverse events or worsening of condition. Pharmacists and prescribers are asked to report any adverse events to the Centre for Adverse Reactions Monitoring (CARM).

3. Issue the prescription

Issue the prescription and send electronically to the local dispensing pharmacy including key information (see list above).

Tools available:

- PHARMAC Access Criteria assessment tool
- Lagevrio™ data sheet
- Patient fact sheet: COVID-19 Seeking medical help – when and how
- Positions to make breathing easier

References:

- Pharmac. Access criteria for antiviral treatment widened as molnupiravir arrives in New Zealand. Access criteria for antiviral treatments widened as molnupiravir arrives in New Zealand - Pharmac | New Zealand Government. Accessed May 2022.
- New Zealand Ministry of Health. *Medsafe data sheet (Lageviro).* Data Sheet Template (medsafe.govt.nz). Accessed May 2022
- Jayk Bernal A, Gomes da Silva MM, Musungaie DB, Kovalchuk E, Gonzalez A, Delos Reyes V, et al. Molnupiravir for Oral Treatment of Covid-19 in Nonhospitalized Patients. New England Journal of Medicine. 2022 Feb 10;386(6):509–20
- Hammond J, Leister-Tebbe H, Gardner A, Abreu P, Bao W, Wisemandle W, et al. Oral Nirmatrelvir for High-Risk, Nonhospitalized Adults with Covid-19. New England Journal of Medicine. 2022 Feb 16;0(0):null.

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