

## Department of Health Distributes Sixth Shipment of Drug to Help Treat COVID-19 Patients in Hospitals

**Harrisburg, PA** – The Department of Health distributed the sixth shipment of the investigational antiviral medication, remdesivir, to treat patients in the hospital with COVID-19. Today, 3,162 doses of medication were sent to [80 hospitals](#). The federal government distributed the shipment to the department on Wednesday, July 1.

“The department is working to give our hospitals every opportunity to treat patients with COVID-19,” Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine said. “It is important to note that there is limited information on the safety and effectiveness of using remdesivir to treat people in the hospital with COVID-19. However, it was shown in a clinical trial to shorten the recovery time in some people, which is why the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has authorized the emergency use of the medication for treatment.”

The Department of Health first distributed 1,200 doses of the medication to 51 hospitals across Pennsylvania on May 12. A second round of 7,938 doses were sent to 79 hospitals on May 15 and May 18, a third round of 8,928 doses was distributed to 81 hospitals on May 22, a fourth round of 4,400 doses was distributed to 73 hospitals on June 3 and a fifth round of 4,788 doses was distributed to 82 hospitals on June 19.

The hospitals that have received these shipments [were determined](#) based on the number and severity of COVID-19 patients at the hospital and the facility’s documented usage of previous rounds of remdesivir. The department will continue to work with our federal partners to acquire more doses of this medication to serve more patients across Pennsylvania.

Remdesivir is given to a patient through an IV once per day for up to 10 days, depending on how critically ill the patient is. According to the FDA, remdesivir may help decrease the amount of coronavirus in your body, which may help you get better faster.

Symptoms of COVID-19 can include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Diarrhea
- Chills
- Repeating shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

Symptoms may appear in as few as two days or as long as 14 days after exposure. Reported illnesses have ranged from people with little to no symptoms to people being severely ill and dying.

As of 12:00 a.m., July 1, there were 87,242 positive cases of COVID-19 statewide in 67 counties and 6,687 confirmed deaths. Most of the patients hospitalized are 65 or older, and

most of the deaths have occurred in patients 65 and older. There have been no pediatric deaths to date.

Pennsylvanians are reminded that mask-wearing is required when visiting businesses in both the yellow and green phases of reopening or in any setting outside the home where social distancing is difficult. Remember: My mask protects you; your mask protects me.

For the latest information for individuals, families, businesses and schools, visit “Responding to COVID-19” on [pa.gov](https://www.pa.gov).

**The Wolf Administration stresses the role Pennsylvanians play in helping to reduce the spread of COVID-19:**

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Cover any coughs or sneezes with your elbow, not your hands.
- Clean surfaces frequently.
- Stay home to avoid spreading COVID-19, especially if you are unwell.
- If you must go out for a life-sustaining reason, please wear a mask.

All Pennsylvania residents are encouraged to sign up for AlertPA, a text notification system for health, weather, and other important alerts like COVID-19 updates from commonwealth agencies. Residents can sign up online at [www.ready.pa.gov/BeInformed/Signup-For-Alerts](https://www.ready.pa.gov/BeInformed/Signup-For-Alerts)