

4 October 2021

133 Molesworth Street
PO Box 5013
Wellington 6140
New Zealand
T+64 4 496 2000

Peter Russell

By email: fyi-request-16568-98413fef@requests.fyi.org.nz

Ref: H202111255

Tēnā koe Peter

Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 30 August 2021 for information relating to COVID-19 treatments. Specifically, you asked:

*“Given that COVID-19 can generally be treated effectively, provided it is treated early, and given the importance of keeping people out of hospital:
What is your early treatment protocol for COVID-19?
What are your Home Treatment Guidelines for COVID-19?”*

It is important for individuals who show cold or flu symptoms to be tested for COVID-19. However, COVID-19 is a respiratory viral illness for which there is no specific treatment. Most people have mild symptoms with supportive therapies such as fluids, rest and anti-fever medication being sufficient to enable full recovery. It is also important to isolate from others to reduce the chance of further transmission of the virus.

The Ministry of Health is not responsible for individual patient care, which is provided by medical practitioners and other healthcare workers employed by district health boards or primary care practices. These practitioners use their clinical skills, knowledge, and experience to decide the specific treatments needed to support each patient. Each organisation will have general best practice principles as well as using an evidence-based approach to treat respiratory viral infections. This includes consulting other colleagues and monitoring for specific symptoms that may indicate the patient needs to be admitted to hospital for specialist care. The Ministry, however, has published some guidance for health professionals that is available at: www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-health-professionals/covid-19-advice-all-health-professionals.

I trust this fulfils your request. Under section 28(3) of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or by calling 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Ministry website at: www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases.

Nāku noa, nā



Dom Harris
Manager – Office of the Deputy Chief Executive
COVID-19 Health System Response