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Antiviral Drug Remdesivir for Coronavirus (COVID-19)

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issues Emergency Use Authorization (EUS) of antiviral drug Remdesivir to treat hospitalized patients with severe COVID-19 disease

What is Emergency Use Authorization (EUS)?

The issuance of an Emergency Use Authorization (EUS) is different from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval. An emergency use authorization (EUA) by the FDA is a temporary authorization that is meant to provide access to medicine in an emergency.

Remdesivir use in COVID-19:

Recently, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration authorized the emergency use of the investigational antiviral drug remdesivir only to treat hospitalized patients with severe Covid-19 disease. It is the first authorized therapy drug for Covid-19 in the United States.
Remdesivir can be used for the treatment of suspected or laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 in adults and children hospitalized with severe disease. Severe disease is defined as patients with

- Low blood oxygen levels **or**
- Need oxygen therapy **or**
- Requiring intensive breathing support such as a mechanical ventilator

Clinical trials showed that remdesivir shortens the recovery times in people who have fallen ill from the new coronavirus compared to those given a placebo.

Remdesivir is administered intravenously by health care providers and there is limited information known so far about the safety and effectiveness of it.

Possible side effects of remdesivir include:

- Increased levels of liver enzymes
- Infusion-related reactions like
    - Low blood pressure
    - Nausea / vomiting
    - Sweating
    - Shivering

Multiple studies are still ongoing for the safety and efficacy of this investigational drug.