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 **StarMed Healthcare has the first antiviral pill to treat COVID-19 patients**

*New pill is for adult patients with mild-to-moderate symptoms*

*Available only at StarMed’s location at 4001 Tuckaseegee Rd. in Charlotte*

**Charlotte, NC (January 19, 2022) –** StarMed Healthcare has supplies of the first antiviral pill available to treat adult patients with mild-to-moderate COVID-19 symptoms. It is most effective when it is taken within five days of being diagnosed with COVID-19.

The pill, manufactured by Merck and Ridgeback Biotherapeutics, is named molnupiravir. It was shown in clinical trials to reduce COVID-19 patients’ chance of hospitalization and death by 30 percent. You must be 18 or older to receive the treatment.

StarMed Healthcare has the pill treatment at its FreeMore location in west Charlotte, 4001 Tuckaseegee Rd, while supplies last. COVID-19 patients can register for the treatment [**here**](https://starmed.care/covid-therapy/). All COVID-19 treatments are no cost to the patient, with or without insurance.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) authorized the emergency use of the treatment last December.

Starmed Healthcare plans to expand the pill treatment to its other locations throughout Charlotte and North Carolina. The pill treatment is for five days and is most effective if you begin as soon as you’re diagnosed with COVID-19.

“We are excited to offer this treatment that can decrease the severity of COVID-19 symptoms and lessen the chance of hospitalization and death,” said Dr. Arin Piramzadian, StarMed Healthcare’s chief medical officer. “We look forward to helping patients who have tested positive and can benefit from this pill treatment. But this isn’t a substitute for a COVID-19 vaccination, which is still your best defense against the virus.”

Until now, COVID-19 treatments required infusion, in which a patient must visit a clinic or hospital. A pill treatment is quicker, easier, and could ultimately reduce the number of hospitalizations.

The new pill treatment works like most antiviral drugs by inhibiting the ability of the SARS-CoV-2 virus to replicate. Doctors hope that they can treat COVID-19 much the same way they do influenza with Tamiflu, an antiviral medication that’s used to prevent serious flu symptoms. In each case, the sooner after diagnosis the medicine is taken, the better the chances of avoiding serious illness.

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