



Memorandum

To: B.C. Acute Care Physicians & Pharmacists

From: British Columbia COVID-19 Therapeutics Committee & Clinical Reference Group

Subject: Dexamethasone for COVID-19 Treatment in Hospitalized Patients Receiving Supplemental Oxygen or Mechanical Ventilation

Date: July 14, 2020

On June 22, 2020, the preliminary report of the Randomised Evaluation of COVID-19 Therapy (RECOVERY) trial was published. Even though the study has not been officially published in a peer-reviewed journal, the results with dexamethasone treatment have warranted an expedited review by the British Columbia COVID-19 Therapeutics Committee (CTC), so that appropriate guidance can be provided to clinicians.

In the [RECOVERY open-label trial](#), dexamethasone 6 mg PO/IV once daily for up to 10 days reduced 28-day mortality when compared to standard of care in patients that require supplemental oxygen (RR 0.80, $p=0.002$) or mechanical ventilation (RR 0.65, $p<0.001$), but did not reduce mortality in those NOT receiving oxygen (RR 1.22, $p=0.14$). Several limitations exist, such as the open-label design and higher mortality rates observed in patients not requiring oxygen, and in addition, the baseline COVID-19-related ICU mortality rates in B.C. are lower than reported in this study. However, the CTC believes that the trial has merit and recommends the following practice change:

Recommendation:

Dexamethasone 6 mg PO/IV q24h for up to 10 days is recommended for hospitalized patients requiring supplemental oxygen OR mechanical ventilation.

If dexamethasone is not available methylprednisolone 30 mg IV q24h or prednisone 40 mg PO q24h are the preferred alternatives.

When dexamethasone supplies are limited they should be reserved for critically ill patients.

The CTC will continue to update the Clinical Practice Guidance for Antimicrobial and Immunomodulatory Therapy in Adult Patients with COVID-19 document based on any new studies and relevant data.

Please refer to the BCCDC website for the most updated information:

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/covid-19-care/clinical-care/treatments>

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