

COVID-19 Monoclonal Antibody (mAb) Therapy and Variants of Concern (VOCs)

In the last week, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (HHS/ASPR) announced they are suspending distribution of the Eli Lilly COVID-19 mAb bamlanivimab for use as monotherapy to the states of California, Arizona, and Nevada due to the pervasiveness of the SARS-CoV-2 California variant (B.1.429) in those areas, and the expected decreased efficacy of bamlanivimab against this variant. Nebraska DHHS recently distributed a HAN alert describing identification of B.1.429 in a few cases in Nebraska, all to that point from the southeastern part of the state.¹

Guidance on alternative combination therapy is as follows:

- Bamlanivimab if used in combination with Lilly's second mAb product, etesevimab, as a cocktail, are expected to retain efficacy against this VOC.
- The Regeneron mAb cocktail product, casirivimab/imdevimab, is also expected to have stable activity against this variant.
- **Nebraska DHHS is recommending that institutions administering mAb therapies begin working towards utilizing only combination monoclonal antibody products and transitioning away from use of bamlanivimab alone. Continue to utilize bamlanivimab monotherapy in appropriate patients if that is your only currently available option while working to make these changes.**

Direct Ordering

COVID-19 mAb cocktail products are ordered and stored as separate vials, but compounded for administration into a single IV infusion. HHS/ASPR also recently made etesevimab available for ordering as a stand-alone product, which will allow institutions, which have significant on-hand supplies of bamlanivimab to order etesevimab separately to add-on and compile Eli Lilly mAb cocktail infusions.

Note: when determining an ordering quantity of stand-alone etesevimab, one vial of bamlanivimab (700mg) is added to two vials of etesevimab (700mg each) to comprise one complete course of combination mAb therapy with the Eli Lilly cocktail.

Ordering for any of these three recommended products [bamlanivimab/etesevimab, casirivimab/imdevimab, or etesevimab alone (to pair with existing supplies of bamlanivimab)] can be done via the AmerisourceBergen COVID mAb-ordering portal.²

LTCF Pilot Program

Nursing homes and long-term care facilities should continue to follow the established process of completing the ICAP online form when requesting mAb therapy. Updated information and guidance on combination therapy can be found on ASAP website.³

¹ <https://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Nebraska-Identifies-B-1-429-Variant-of-COVID-19.aspx>

² <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/255d164d67834793b4ab549e160941e8>

³ <https://asap.nebraskamed.com/monoclonal-antibody-project/>