

October 1, 2021

Joint message about ivermectin in the prevention and treatment of COVID-19

Ivermectin is an anthelmintic approved in Canada for veterinary and human use. In humans, ivermectin is only approved for treatment of parasitic infections (oral) and rosacea (topical).

The most effective strategy for preventing COVID-19 continues to be immunization and all Health Canada approved vaccines provide a high level of protection.

Ivermectin for prophylaxis or treatment of COVID-19 has been promoted on social media and it has been reported that some people are purchasing ivermectin from animal feed stores as well as seeking to obtain prescriptions from providers to be filled at pharmacies. Products approved for veterinary use **should not be used** in humans and may deliver excessive doses leading to harm.

Currently, oral ivermectin (Stromectol®) is in short supply due to increased demand, possibly due to inappropriate prescribing for COVID-19, and therefore may be unavailable for patients who need it to treat indicated medical conditions.

Adverse effects

The following adverse effects have been reported in people who have been exposed to veterinary products: dizziness, asthenia, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, seizure, ataxia, dyspnea, abdominal pain, paresthesia, and urticaria.

Based on the current scientific evidence and best-practice guidelines, the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC, the College of Pharmacists of BC and the BC College of Nurses and Midwives do not approve of the use of ivermectin for either treatment or prophylaxis for COVID-19 and registrants must not prescribe it for this purpose.

This direction is further supported by the evidence from [Health Canada](#), the World Health Organization ([WHO](#)), and the British Columbia [COVID-19 Therapeutics Committee guidance document](#).

Registrants must not provide care that does not meet the expected standards of their profession.

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Note: With appreciation to the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan and its provincial health partners who sent a similar email to physicians, surgeons, nurses and pharmacists in that province.