

VA



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VA announces new clinical trial for Veterans with COVID-19

Researchers to study blood plasma for treating seriously ill patients

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) today announced a new clinical trial to study convalescent plasma for treating seriously ill [COVID-19](#) patients as part of a larger effort to give Veterans faster access to potential COVID-19 treatments and test the treatments’ effectiveness.

The trial is the first of multiple studies in VA Coronavirus Research and Efficacy Studies (VA CURES), a master protocol that offers a standardized framework for studying potential treatments for COVID-19 without the need for a new study design and protocol each time.

“This trial will go a long way toward helping in the fight against COVID-19,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “VA CURES will provide valuable information that will benefit our Veterans who are battling COVID-19, as well as other patients and the medical community in general.”

The trial will enroll around 700 Veterans with COVID-19 who are hospitalized at VA medical centers. A study team will randomize the study volunteers to receive either convalescent plasma or a saline placebo, and track and assess recovery and effects of the treatment.

Convalescent plasma is donated by people who have recovered from COVID-19 and have antibodies against the virus in their blood. Antibodies are proteins the body makes to fight infections.

The [U.S. Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#) previously authorized the use of convalescent plasma as an investigational treatment for COVID-19 through FDA’s expanded access program. The program, used widely throughout the nation, including at many VA sites, ended Aug. 28. FDA has since authorized the [emergency use](#) of the therapy based on the available scientific evidence to date. FDA stresses further evidence from rigorous trials — such as the new VA study — is “critically important” for establishing safety and efficacy.

Visit [VA COVID-19 research](#) for more information.

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