



# NEWS ALERT

## COVID-19 VACCINE UPDATE 4 FEBRUARY 2022



New Level 1 guidelines; new COVID-19 pill

### **HOT OFF THE PRESS:**



South African COVID-19 Level 1 guidelines no longer require people who have tested positive but have no symptoms to isolate. Those who do show symptoms now only have to isolate for 7 days. Contacts do not have to isolate unless they show symptoms.



These changes are based on current levels of vaccination, immunity and infections in South Africa. Blood tests show that 60-80% of our population has some level of immunity.



With COVID here to stay, and new variants very likely to develop, pharmaceutical companies continue to research treatments to help prevent serious illness and death. Merck and Pfizer have both developed pills (Molnupiravir and Paxlovid respectively) designed to be taken within the first 5 days of COVID symptoms to lower the risk of hospitalisation and death.



These pills do not replace vaccines, and vaccination remains the best form of protection against falling seriously ill from COVID. The pills are designed as a back-up, to assist with managing the disease. Rather than trying to kill the virus (as vaccines get your immune system to do), the pills aim to stop it spreading through your body, and in this way lower your chances of becoming so ill you may die.



For people most likely to get very sick with COVID – those over 60, or those with comorbidities like diabetes or obesity – these pills could be a gamechanger. This treatment is currently not available in South Africa. Once it hits our shores, speak to your doctor about whether you may be eligible for the treatment if you get COVID-19.

If you are 12 years or older, register and get vaccinated:

[vaccine.enroll.gov.za](https://vaccine.enroll.gov.za)

WhatsApp REGISTER to: 0600 123 456

Free SMS: \*134\*832#

Call 0860 142 142 weekdays 8AM–8PM

In person at a vaccination site

Until everyone has been fully vaccinated, it is important to protect those around you by adhering strictly to COVID-19 safety protocols:



Wear a mask



Sanitise your hands regularly



Maintain social distancing

CareWorks Contact Centre: 0800 24 36 72

Weekdays: 8AM to 5PM and Weekends: 8AM to 1PM

WhatsApp: 082 735 4472

