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AstraZeneca's long acting covid antibody treatment Evusheld has now been approved in the UK as of the 17th of March. This news appears to be a breakthrough in action towards protecting those who are either unable to get the vaccine or have not responded to them as well as others.

Although this is a step in the right direction, we are still waiting on further detail as to how the Government will be proceeding with the rollout of this treatment. There are still question marks regarding access, and eligibility at this time. The Government will confirm this information in due course so we will update our website accordingly as and when this is released.

See the official government press release below:

https://www.gov.uk/government/news/evusheld-approved-to-prevent-covid-19-in-people-whose-immune-response-is-poor

How is it different to other COVID-19 treatments?

Evusheld is a combination of two monoclonal antibodies, Tixagevimab and Cilgavimab. They are designed to bind the spike protein which prevents the virus from being able to attach to and enter cells. They are to be given as two separate intramuscular injections one after the other. You can see the patient information leaflet and further information on the drugs here.:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulatory-approval-of-evusheld-tixagevimabcilgavimab

How effective is Evusheld?

Clinical trials of the drug in adults have shown that Evusheld reduced the risk of symptomatic COVID-19 by 77%. This protection was then shown to last for at least 6 months in clinical samples. There is currently not enough clinical data to show how well this works against the Omicron variant, but the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) are hopeful that a higher dose will be enough to prevent and neutralise it.

It is important to note that the vaccines should still be used as a first line of defence and that Evusheld is not being recommended as a substitute.