# COVID-19 Telehealth Partner Toolkit Talking Points

* In March 2022, the Federal government started the [Test to Treat](https://aspr.hhs.gov/TestToTreat/Pages/process.aspx) initiative to make it easier for people to access free COVID-19 treatments.
* At select participating Test to Treat pharmacy sites, people can get a free COVID-19 test, visit a medical provider, and if needed and appropriate, receive free oral antiviral pills all in the same visit. The [Test to Treat locator](https://covid-19-test-to-treat-locator-dhhs.hub.arcgis.com/) identifies the site nearest to the individual.
* To further expand access to COVID-19 treatment options, in July 2022 DOH scaled up the Test to Treat initiative to include a new telehealth option.
* This program makes telehealth consultations for COVID-19 available to everyone, regardless of insurance status, with no out-of-pocket costs.
* With this telehealth option, individuals who test positive for COVID-19 with a self-test or testing site can speak with a provider through a virtual or phone consultation to determine if treatment is right for them, rather than having to go to a clinic or a Test to Treat pharmacy.
* Telehealth can help fast-track oral antiviral prescriptions for people who might not have regular access to a healthcare provider or live near a Test to Treat site.
* Telehealth appointments are currently available in 17 languages through translation services. If the patient is pregnant, nursing, needs additional languages assistance, or other COVID-19 services, they should arrange appointments through the DOH Information Line. Color Health now supports telehealth consults for individuals that are between the ages of 12-17.
* Those interested to sign up virtually via [DOH’s telehealth webpage](https://doh.wa.gov/emergencies/covid-19/treatments/telehealth) complete a brief intake form via DOH partner Color Health. People will then be directed to [a webpage operated by Color](https://home.color.com/consults/covid_antivirals/request/about?partner=covid-19-treatment-wa) for quickest results. There is also a phone call option available at 1-833-273-6330 for those who do not have fast internet service or a computer. Individuals who find computer navigation challenging can be assisted by another but will need to personally be available if a consultation occurs.
* If the information provided indicates treatment may be appropriate, people will be connected virtually with a health care provider within 5–30 minutes for a consultation. Telehealth providers are available every day from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. PST.
* After receiving a telehealth consultation, patients eligible for treatment will receive a prescription for pick-up at the nearest available pharmacy with oral antivirals, with more than 1,000 sites available across the state, or have their medication delivered directly to their home.
* The telehealth initiative primarily focuses on prescriptions for [Paxlovid and Lagevrio](https://www.fda.gov/media/155051/download), oral [antiviral drugs](https://doh.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2022-03/825-029-WhatAreOralAntivirals.pdf?uid=62902d99724e9) that may reduce the risk of hospitalization by approximately 90 percent and 30 percent, respectively.

Antivirals Talking Points:

* The most effective tool for preventing severe COVID-19 illness is vaccination.
* Knowing about treatment options, and getting treatment early, can be crucial for preventing severe illness and hospitalization.
* The most effective available treatment is the oral antiviral pill, Paxlovid, which has been shown to reduce the risk of hospitalization or death by about 90 percent in unvaccinated individuals.
* Oral antivirals are now in ample supply across Washington.
* Oral antivirals like Paxlovid are only available by prescription and people need to take them within the first five days of symptoms to have an effect.
* Oral antivirals are an important treatment for people at high risk of severe illness and hospitalization. People at high risk include those 50 years old or older, obese, pregnant, have chronic medical conditions, such as heart, lung, or kidney disease, or people taking immunosuppressant treatments. For more information on what may place people at high risk, visit the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html).
* Individuals at high risk for severe disease who have health care providers should consult with them to understand whether oral antivirals or other COVID-19 therapies could help them.