

# *Panama assesses the use of Cuban drug to fight coronavirus*

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Panama, Mar 10 (RHC) After registering the first case of the new coronavirus (COVID-19), Panamanian health authorities voiced on Monday the possibility of using recombinant Interferon Alpha 2B, a medicine patented and produced by Cuba.

In statements to the press, the national director of Pharmacy and Drugs of the Ministry of Health (MINSa), Elvia Lau, explained that the drug is used in China with very good results in patients who present an advanced stage of the disease.

According to Prensa Latina, she said that there are three registered interferons in Panama, including recombinant Alpha 2B, so there would be no problem in acquiring it.

Her assessment was shared by Health Minister Eyra Ruiz, who said that 'if it has been shown to be effective, of course, we will have it.'

Ruiz said that for the past two months, the Ministry of Health and the Social Security Fund have been buying equipment and supplies to adapt intensive care rooms and that Panama is prepared to face "this health conflict."

The drug is currently produced at the ChangHeber Chinese-Cuban plant, installed in the Asian giant in Jilin province. It is one of the products created by Cuba's biotechnology industry for the treatment of viral

infections caused by HIV, human papillomavirus, and hepatitis types B and C.

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