

FDA approves COVID-19 pill developed by Pfizer

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Washington, December 23 (RHC)-- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved emergency use of the first oral medication against COVID-19. The pill was developed by Pfizer and is marketed as Paxlovid.

In a clinical trial, the drug cut the risk of hospitalization or death by nearly 90% in people who received it within five days of the onset of symptoms. The drug is in short supply and will initially only be used to treat people 12 and up who are at high risk of severe disease.

Meanwhile, U.S. hospitals are warning of shortages of monoclonal antibody treatments. If administered soon after infection, monoclonals can dramatically cut the risk of severe illness or death, but two of the three therapies available in the U.S. appear to be useless against the Omicron variant, with only one -- produced by GlaxoSmithKline -- able to neutralize the virus.

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