HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

Eli Lilly Seeks Approval for Experimental COVID-19 Antibody Drug

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Drug maker Eli Lilly and Company said Wednesday it has asked U.S. officials to approve emergency use of an experimental antibody treatment for COVID-19.

Lilly said early results of a study show the treatment reduced hospital emergency room visits for persons with mild or moderate forms of COVID-19. It said the therapy also reduced signs of the disease, the amount of the virus and length of hospital stays for such patients.

The company announced the study's partial results before a meeting with investors and the public. The findings have yet to be published or examined by independent scientists.

The antibody treatment appears to work like one given to President Donald Trump last Friday. The treatment he took was developed by Regeneron Pharmaceuticals.

Both therapies are designed to connect human antibodies to the coronavirus that causes COVID-19 and limit its ability to spread. The antibodies are usually given as a one-time treatment through **intravenous** therapy.

Daniel Skovronsky is a doctor and Eli Lilly's chief scientific officer. He said in a statement, "We believe the data generated to date provide sufficient evidence that both **monotherapy** and combination therapy may be effective to treat COVID-19 in patients with a high risk for serious **outcomes**."

The monotherapy involves an antibody called LY-CoV555. The combination therapy combines that antibody with an antibody called LY-CoV016.

The medical news website StatNews reported that "Lilly had previously released results for a similar treatment using one antibody, which experts **viewed** as promising. But the new results, of a combination of two antibodies, appear, based on limited data provided in a press release, to be more **robust**."

The drug maker is asking the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to permit use of its single antibody treatment in emergency situations. The company expects to seek government approval of the combination treatment in November.

At this time, the FDA has only approved the drug remdesivir for emergency use in COVID-19 patients. The president's personal doctor confirmed that Trump has also started a five-day treatment of remdesivir.

Lilly said it has already started manufacturing the drug LY-CoV555. The company expects to have 100,000 **doses** ready in October and 1 million by the end of the year. It hopes to have 50,000 doses of the combination therapy ready by year's end.

The drug maker added that it is also "working with **regulators** around the world to make these treatments available."

I'm Jonathan Evans.

Hai Do wrote this story for Learning English. George Grow was the editor.

Words in This Story

intravenous - adj. through a vein

monotherapy - n. the use of a single drug to treat a disease or condition

outcome - n. something that happens as a result of an activity or process

view - v. to think about something in a particular way

robust - adj. strongly formed

dose - n. the amount of medicine

regulator - n. a government official who controls the public activity by making and enforcing rules