



health

Department:  
Health  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



## INTERNAL MEMO

Date:	29 March 2021		
To:	<b>Minister ZL Mkhize, Honorable Minister of Health</b>	From:	<b>Ministerial Advisory Committee (MAC) on COVID-19</b>

### UPDATED ADVISORY ON IVERMECTIN

#### Statement

The MAC on COVID-19 notes the pending court cases in which the court is being asked to overrule SAHPRA's regulatory authority so that ivermectin can be made available without registration in South Africa. The MAC has released advisories on three previous occasions on the topic, but wishes to affirm that:

- The peer-reviewed literature on the topic does not support ivermectin's use as either prophylaxis or treatment for COVID-19.<sup>1</sup>
- The National Essential Medicines Committee's COVID-19 subcommittee's recent rapid reviews on ivermectin, which include preprints that have not yet been peer-reviewed, concluded that there is insufficient evidence to recommend ivermectin as prophylaxis or treatment for COVID-19.<sup>2,3</sup> This comports with SAHPRA's own evidence review on the topic, as well as that of Merck, the drug's own manufacturer.<sup>4</sup> The MAC agrees with these appraisals.
- The drug is not recommended by the World Health Organization for the treatment of COVID-19.

#### Recommendations

- We recommend that the Department of Health publicly announces that (a) ivermectin is currently not recommended as either prophylaxis or treatment for COVID-19, pending further data, and that (b) the department supports the vital role SAHPRA plays in regulating medicines, specifically including ivermectin.

1 López-Medina E, López P, Hurtado IC, et al. Effect of Ivermectin on Time to Resolution of Symptoms Among Adults With Mild COVID-19: A Randomized Clinical Trial. *JAMA*. Published online March 04, 2021. doi:10.1001/jama.2021.3071

2 [http://www.health.gov.za/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Rapid-review-of-Ivermectin-for-COVID-19\\_25January2021.pdf](http://www.health.gov.za/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Rapid-review-of-Ivermectin-for-COVID-19_25January2021.pdf)

3 [http://www.health.gov.za/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Rapid-review-of-Ivermectin-for-prophylaxis-of-COVID-19\\_25January2021.pdf](http://www.health.gov.za/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Rapid-review-of-Ivermectin-for-prophylaxis-of-COVID-19_25January2021.pdf)

4 <https://www.merck.com/news/merck-statement-on-ivermectin-use-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/>

Thank you for consideration.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marian Jacobs". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

**PROF MARIAN JACOBS**

**CO-CHAIRPERSONS: MINISTERIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON COVID-19**

**DATE: 29 March 2021**

**CC:**

- » **Dr S Buthelezi (Director-General)**
- » **Dr T Pillay (Deputy Director-General)**
- » **Incident Management Team**