

COVID-19 - WCO-WHO Cooperation

List of priority medicines for customs during COVID-19 pandemic

WHO Secretariats of INN Programme and EML

Background

The World Customs Organisation (WCO) wishes to produce a list of medical supplies and medicines for COVID-19, which will serve to help customs and economic operators identify them and facilitate their classification at the border. The list contains medicines used in the general management of hospitalised patients and some medicines being used as part of the direct treatment against COVID-19 with their suggested HS codes. Where appropriate, medicines are identified by their International Nonproprietary Names (INN).

As of 15 January 2022, the present COVID-19 pandemic has affected 223 countries, areas or territories, where more than 326 million cases have been confirmed, and more than 5,500,000 people have died as a consequence of the infection. Due to the clinical characteristics of this coronavirus disease and its evolution, COVID-19 is challenging the health system of many countries, as patients in the severe stage require transfer to Intensive Care Units (ICU) and mechanical ventilation, intubation, sedation, and treatment of potential coinfections.

Within this framework, shortages of medicines can worsen the situation, especially in three cases:

- (1) Medicines used in the general management of hospitalised patients with COVID-19.
- (2) Medicines which are used as part of the direct treatment against COVID-19 in hospitalised patients.
- (3) Medicines where interrupted supply could result in serious health consequences.

Method

The following tables have been prepared considering different documents published by National Health Authorities, scientific societies or pharmacology experts, namely:

- (1) The Office of the Chief Pharmacist Department for Health and Wellbeing; Government of South Australia.
- (2) The Australian Therapeutics and Goods Administration (TGA)
- (3) The Essential Medicines List for the management of COVID-19 patients admitted to ICU prepared by the Argentinian CUFAR, a WHO-CC for the Rational Use of Medicines.
- (4) NICE COVID-19 rapid guidelines.
- (5) The National guidelines for the management of adult COVID-19 patients issued by different medical societies in Panama.

(6) Brazilian Ministry of Health, Protocolo de Manejo Clínico da Covid-19 na Atenção Especializada.

The complete references appear at the end of the document.

This is a living document, which will be regularly updated.

General Disclaimer:

The WHO Secretariats of the International Nonproprietary Name Programme and of the Model List of Essential Medicines, in this exceptional situation, wish to serve customs and economic operators by compiling a list of active substances that have been used in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. This interim list will be continuously updated and will be a living document.

In view of the exceptional circumstances and the emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Secretariats are not in a position to verify the possible benefits and harms of the listed medicines for treatment and management of COVID-19, as well as the dosage. The mention of specific medicines or combinations does not imply that they are endorsed or recommended by WHO against COVID-19 or in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The responsibility for the interpretation and use of the material lies with the reader. In no event shall WHO and WCO be liable for damages arising from its use.

The HS 2022 codes were provided by the WCO Secretariat with a view to facilitating the classification at the international level (6 digit of the HS) of the medicines contained in the list. Economic operators are kindly advised to consult with the relevant Customs administrations in relation to classification at domestic levels (7 or more digits) or in the event of any discrepancy between their practices and this list.

Some INN substances were classified by the Harmonized System Committee (HSC). The complete table of all INN substances classified by the HSC can be found at:

http://www.wcoomd.org/en/topics/nomenclature/instrument-and-tools/tools-to-assist-with-the-classification-in-the-hs/hs_classification-decisions/inn-table.aspx

Custom Medicines Prioritization lists

Table 1.- Medicines used in the general management of hospitalised patients with COVID-19.

Condition / Symptom	Medicine <i>INN (Proposed List)</i> <i>(Recommended List)</i>	HS 2022 Codes as pure substances / (*) put up as medicaments in measured doses	2019 Model List of Essential Medicines section
Fever	paracetamol (8)(4)	2924.29; 3004.90*	2.1 Non-opioids and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medicines (NSAIDs)
Medicinal gas	Oxygen	2804.40	1.1 General anaesthetics and oxygen 1.1.1 Inhalational medicines
Analgesia	Morphine morphine glucuronide (92)(54)	2939.11; 3004.49* 2939.19; 3004.49*	1.3 Preoperative medication and sedation for short-term procedures
Sedation	fentanyl (14)(8)	2933.33; 3004.90*	2.2 Opioid analgesics
	propofol (49)(23)	2907.19; 3004.90*	1.1 General anaesthetics and oxygen 1.2 Injectable medicines
	midazolam (40) (19)	2933.91; 3004.90*	1.3 Preoperative medication and sedation for short-term procedures
	lorazepam (23)(10)	2933.91; 3004.90*	5. ANTICONVULSANTS/ANTIEPILEPTICS
	haloperidol (10)(4)	2933.39; 3004.90*	2.3 Medicines for pain and palliative care
	levomepromazine (8)(4)	2934.30; 3004.90*	
Muscle relaxant	Atracurium ¹ atracurium besilate (42)(20)	2933.49; 3004.90*	20. MUSCLE RELAXANTS (PERIPHERALLY-ACTING) AND CHOLINESTERASE INHIBITORS
	Succinylcholine suxamethonium chloride (1)	2923.90; 3004.90*	20. MUSCLE RELAXANTS (PERIPHERALLY-ACTING) AND CHOLINESTERASE INHIBITORS
Sedation adjuvant	Atropine atropine methonitrate (4)(3) atropine oxide (13)(5)	2939.79; 3004.49* 2939.79; 3004.49* 2939.79; 3004.49*	1.3 Preoperative medication and sedation for short-term procedures
Anti-infectives (for coinfections; need to refer to local guidelines and AMR data)	amoxicillin (27)(12)+ clavulanic acid ² (44)(21)	3003.10; 3004.10*	6.2.1 Access group antibiotics
	amoxicillin (27)(12)	2941.10; 3004.10*	6.2.1 Access group antibiotics
	azithromycin (58)(28)	2941.90; 3004.20*	6.2.2 Watch group antibiotics
	ceftriaxone (44)(21)	2941.90; 3004.20*	6.2.2 Watch group antibiotics
	ceftazidime (44)(21)	2941.90; 3004.20*	6.2.2 Watch group antibiotics
	doxycycline (16)(8)	2941.30; 3004.20*	6.2.1 Access group antibiotics
	vancomycin (6)(3)	2941.90; 3004.20*	6.2.2 Watch group antibiotics
	meropenem (60)(29) ³	2941.90; 3004.20*	6.2.2 Watch group antibiotics
	amikacin (30)(14)	2941.90; 3004.20*	6.2.1 Access group antibiotics
	piperacillin (38)(18)+ tazobactam (63)(29)	3003.10; 3004.10*	6.2.2 Watch group antibiotics
	amphotericin B (10)(4)	2941.90; 3004.20*	6.3 Antifungal medicines
Glucocorticoids	hydrocortisone (1)(6) ⁴	2937.21; 3004.32*	3. Antiallergics and medicines used in anaphylaxis
Vasoactive medicines	norepinephrine (45)(23) ⁵	2937.90; 3004.39*	3. ANTIALLERGICS AND MEDICINES USED IN ANAPHYLAXIS
	epinephrine (16)(7) ⁶	2937.90; 3004.39*	
	dobutamine (29)(13)	2922.29; 3004.90*	
	Vasopressin vasopressin injection (16)(7)	2937.19; 3004.39*	
Myocardial dysfunction	levosimendan (68)(23) ⁷	2933.99; 3004.90*	
	milrinone (50)(24) ⁷	2933.79; 3004.90*	
Volume expanders (crystalloids)	Saline solution	2501.00; 3004.90*	26.2 Solutions correcting water, electrolyte and acid-base disturbances
	Ringer's lactate	3004.90*	26.2 Solutions correcting water, electrolyte and acid-base disturbances
Medicines for influenza co-infection	oseltamivir (80)(42) ⁸	2924.29; 3004.90*	6.4.3 Other antivirals
Anticoagulant	enoxaparin enoxaparin sodium (77)(39)	3001.90; 3004.90*	10.2 Medicines affecting coagulation
	heparin sodium (54)(26)	3001.90; 3004.90*	10.2 Medicines affecting coagulation
Antacids	omeprazole (46)(22)	2933.39; 3004.90*	17.1 Antiulcer medicines
	ranitidine (41)(19)	2932.19; 3004.90*	17.1 Antiulcer medicines

Antiemetic	metoclopramide (14)(6)	2924.29; 3004.90*	17.2 Antiemetic medicines
	ondansetron (62)(29)	2933.29; 3004.90*	17.2 Antiemetic medicines
Antiseptic	chlorhexidine (6)(3)	2925.29; 3004.90*	15.1 Antiseptics
	alcohol-based hand rub	3808.94	15.1 Antiseptics
	povidone (74)(36)-iodine	3905.99; 3004.90*	15.1 Antiseptics
Bronchodilators	salbutamol (20)(9)	2922.50; 3004.90*	25.1 Antiasthmatic and medicines for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
	ipratropium bromide (31)(14)	2939.79; 3004.49*	25.1 Antiasthmatic and medicines for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
Cough suppressants	Codeine	2939.11; 3004.49*	2.2 Opioid analgesics

¹ [vecuronium bromide](#) (46)(22) can be an alternative. (HS Codes: 2933.49; 3004.90*)

² [ampicillin](#) (13)(8) + [sulbactam](#) (45)(21) can be an alternative. (HS Codes: 3003.10; 3004.10*)

³ [imipenem](#) (50)(24) + [cilastatin](#) (50)(24) can be an alternative. (HS Codes: 3003.20; 3004.20*)

⁴ [methylprednisolone](#) (8)(4) can be an alternative. (HS Codes: 2937.29; 3004.32*)

⁵ Recommended as first choice in patients with shock, as it produces less tachycardia than [epinephrine](#) (16)(7).

⁶ Vasopressin can be an alternative.

⁷ Panama guidelines (see Ref.)

⁸ In the case of influenza virus co-infection in compromised patients.

Table 2.- Medicines which are used as part of the direct treatment against COVID-19 in hospitalised patients.¹

Medicine INN (Proposed List) (Recommended List)	HS 2022 Codes as pure substances / (*) put up as medicaments in measured doses	2019 Model List of Essential Medicines section ²
hydroxychloroquine (8)(4)	2933.49; 3004.90*	29.2 Disease-modifying agents used in rheumatoid disorders (DMARDs)
chloroquine (4)(3)	2933.49; 3004.60*	6.5.3 Malaria due to <i>Plasmodium vivax</i> , <i>ovale</i> , <i>malariae</i> 29.2 Disease-modifying agents used in rheumatoid disorders (DMARDs)
azithromycin (58)(28)	2941.90; 3004.20*	6.2.2 Watch group antibiotics
lopinavir (80)(42)	2933.59; 3004.90*	6.4.2.3 Protease inhibitors
ritonavir (74)(36)	2934.10; 3004.90*	
remdesivir (116)(78)	2934.99; 3004.90*	-
interferon alfa (73)(36)	3002.13; 3002.15*	6.4.4.2.3 Other antivirals for hepatitis C
ribavirin (31)(40)	2934.99; 3004.90*	6.4.3 Other antivirals

¹ Medicines being tested in different hospitals. Each country should identify the list of medicines prescribed in its hospitals.

² Medicines being tested for COVID-19 have not been included on the EML for COVID-19; in the above table are reported the sections for which they have been included in EML.

Table 3.- Medicines which interrupted supply could result in serious health consequences.

Medicine	2019 Model List of Essential Medicines section
Prescription medicines^{1 2}	
Analgesics	2.1 Non-opioids and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medicines (NSAIDs)
Anaphylaxis treatment	3. ANTIALLERGICS AND MEDICINES USED IN ANAPHYLAXIS
Antianginal	12.1 Antianginal medicines
Anti-arrhythmics	12.2 Antiarrhythmic medicines
Anti-coagulants	10.2 Medicines affecting coagulation
Anti-depressants	24.2.1 Medicines used in depressive disorders
Anti-diarrhoeals	17.5 Medicines used in diarrhoea
Anti-epileptics	5. ANTICONVULSANTS/ANTIEPILEPTICS
Anti-hypertensives	12.3 Antihypertensive medicines
Anti-parkinson drugs	9. ANTIPARKINSONISM MEDICINES
Anti-platelets	12.5.1 Anti-platelet medicines
Anti-psychotics	24.1 Medicines used in psychotic disorders
Anti-virals	6.4.2 Antiretrovirals
Benzodiazepines	24.3 Medicines for anxiety disorders
Cancer/Palliative care medicines	8.2 Antineoplastics and supportive medicines
Diuretics	16. DIURETICS
Endocrine medicines	18. MEDICINES FOR ENDOCRINE DISORDERS

Gastrointestinal medicines	17. GASTROINTESTINAL MEDICINES
Glaucoma eye drops	21.4 Miotics and antiglaucoma medicines
Immunosuppressants	8. IMMUNOMODULATORS AND ANTINEOPLASTICS
Insulins	18.5.1 Insulins
Oral contraceptives	22.1.1 Oral hormonal contraceptives
Oral hypoglycaemics	18.5.2 Oral hypoglycaemic agents
Respiratory medicines	25.1 Antiasthmatic and medicines for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
Non-prescription medicines^{1, 3, 4}	
epinephrine (adrenaline) autoinjector (HS Code: 3004.39*)	3. ANTIALLERGICS AND MEDICINES USED IN ANAPHYLAXIS
chloramphenicol (1)(1) eye drops/ointment (HS Code: 2941.40; 3004.20*)	
GTN (glyceryl trinitrate) (HS Code: 2920.90; 3004.90*)	12.1 Antianginal medicines
levonorgestrel (33)(15) (HS Code: 2937.23; 3004.39*)	22.1.1 Oral hormonal contraceptives
naloxone (13)(5) (HS Code: 2939.19; 3004.49*)	4. ANTIDOTES AND OTHER SUBSTANCES USED IN POISONINGS
salbutamol (20)(9) (HS Code: 2922.50; 3004.90*)	25.1 Antiasthmatic and medicines for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
Medicines used in specific programs	
WHO Global Malaria Program	
WHO Global TB Program	
HIV/AIDS Program	

¹ List recommended by the Australian TGA.

² Classifications are not given for classes of medicaments as classification varies dependent on the specific substance.

³ In certain countries, some of these active ingredients can be prescription medicines.

⁴ Classifications not marked are for the pure substance. Classifications marked * are for the substances put up as medicaments in measured doses. Note, the classification for epinephrine if it is imported as a pure substance, *not in an autoinjector or otherwise put up for retail sale or in measured doses*, is 2937.90.

References

- WHO International Nonproprietary Names Programme
<https://www.who.int/medicines/services/inn/en/>
Lists of Recommended and Proposed INNs
<https://www.who.int/medicines/publications/druginformation/innlists/en/>
INN Mednet
<https://mednet.who.int/inn>
- Therapeutics Goods Administration (TGA) **COVID-19 limits on dispensing and sales at pharmacies**. Link: <https://www.tga.gov.au/media-release/limits-dispensing-and-sales-prescription-and-over-counter-medicines>
- Dept. Health and Wellbeing. Government of South Australia. **Emergency Supply of essential medicines and COVID 19**. Link: <https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/923029ea-fcba-4fb7-b0cd-11a66c86f5d7/Health+Professionals+Factsheet+-+Emergency+Supply+of+essential+medicines+and+the+Coronavirus.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CACHEID=ROOTWORKSPACE-923029ea-fcba-4fb7-b0cd-11a66c86f5d7-n4P0JEW>
- CUFAR – PAHO: **The Essential Medicines List for the management of COVID-19 patients admitted to ICU**. Link: <https://www.paho.org/en/documents/lista-medicamentos-esenciales-para-manejo-pacientes-que-ingresan-unidades-cuidados>

- NICE. COVID-19 rapid guideline: managing suspected or confirmed pneumonia in adults in the community. Link: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng165>
- NICE. COVID-19 rapid guideline: managing symptoms (including at the end of life) in the community. Link: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng163>
- NICE. COVID-19 rapid guideline: severe asthma. Link: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng166>
- Brazilian Ministry of Health. Protocolo de Manejo Clínico da Covid-19 na Atenção Especializada. Link: http://bvsms.saude.gov.br/bvs/publicacoes/manejo_clinico_covid-19_atencao_especializada.pdf
- Sociedad de Enfermedades Infecciosas de Panamá (SEIP), Asociación Panameña de Neumología y Cirugía del Tórax (APNCT), Asociación Panameña de Médicos Intensivistas (ASPAMI), Sociedad Panameña de Anestesiología, Reanimación y Algiología (SPARA), Sociedad Panameña de Medicina Interna (SPMI), Asociación Panameña de Medicina de Emergencias (ASPAME), Sociedad Panameña de Reumatología (SPR), Asociación Panameña de Alergología e Inmunología Clínica (APAIC), Asociación Panameña de Geriátrica (APG), Asociación Panameña de Medicina Crítica y Terapia Intensiva (APMCTI), Asociación Panameña de Neurología (APN), Sociedad Panameña de Nefrología e Hipertensión (SPNH). **National guidelines for the management of adult COVID-19 patients**. Panamá, 16 March, Ri 2020.
- FEMEBA (Argentinian Medical Federation). Coronavirus y medicamentos específicos: ¿qué sabemos hasta ahora? Informe Área Farmacología, 31 de marzo 2020. Link: <https://www.fundacionfemeba.org.ar/blog/farmacologia-7/post/informe-coronavirus-y-medicamentos-especificos-que-sabemos-hasta-ahora-47679>
- WHO. **Report of the WHO-China Joint Mission on Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)**. February 2020. Link: <https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/who-china-joint-mission-on-covid-19-final-report.pdf>
- Sociedad Peruana de Enfermedades Infecciosas y Tropicales (SPEIT) revisada y consensuada con la Sociedad Peruana de Medicina Intensiva (SOPEMI), Sociedad Peruana de Medicina Interna (SPMI), Sociedad Peruana de Neumología (SPN). **Propuesta en base a consideración de manejo de COVID – 19** Link: https://www.call.org.pe/coronavirus/doc/20200326_0309_67_0.pdf