



Press Release

Issued: 28 October 2020

UNDER STRICT EMBARGO until 00:01 Thursday 29 October 2020

Covid-19 drug trial raises prospect of home-based treatment

A drug first developed more than 30 years ago is to have its effectiveness at reducing the progression of Covid-19 trialed in people who are self-isolating after testing positive for the disease.

Researchers hope the treatment, which has been used for many years in Japan to reduce inflammation of the pancreas, if effective will reduce hospital admissions and ease pressure on the NHS.

Scientists say the drug, called Camostat, can work by suppressing the ability of COVID-19 virus to infect human cells.

This trial, called SPIKE-1, is one of the first to focus on people at home who have Covid-19. Most others until now have looked at patients in hospital.

The team believe that Camostat could be a potential treatment due to the data already gathered showing that it impairs the entry of coronaviruses into cells and may help stop the disease in humans.

Anyone over the age of 18 who has recently tested positive for Covid-19 can register their interest in the study by contacting the research team via <http://edin.ac/spike1> or calling 07341030159.

Anyone who registers interest will be contacted by a clinical researcher to discuss the study in detail and have their suitability checked.

A member of the research team will then visit potential participants at home in order to obtain a blood sample and a nose and throat swab.

Those who can take part will be assigned to one of two groups at random – one will receive Camostat and the other will not.

Those who are part of the study and receiving Camostat will be provided with enough drugs for 14 days at home.

All trial participants will receive a daily call from a clinical researcher who will ask the participant about their current symptoms.

They will also be asked to provide information on their oxygen levels, temperature and pulse, using equipment provided by the research team.

If the participant shows signs of deteriorating, the team will recommend that the participant seeks further medical advice or hospital admission.

The study hopes to recruit 400 participants, initially from Edinburgh and the Lothians, with other sites across the UK due to open soon.

A team from the University of Edinburgh is working with Latus Therapeutics on the SPIKE-1 study, which is being run by Cancer Research UK's Centre for Drug Development, at no cost to Cancer Research UK.



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This study is fully funded by LifeArc, a charity that helps fund and develop academic research.

The trial is part of STOPCOVID, a University of Edinburgh project, funded by LifeArc and Baillie Gifford, which is testing existing and experimental drugs to find a treatment for Covid-19.

STOPCOVID lead Professor Kev Dhaliwal at the University of Edinburgh, said: "Most therapeutic research has focused on treating Covid-19 patients in hospitals. As with all diseases, early treatment is always more effective. SPIKE-1 will allow us to keep a careful watch over patients at home in the early stages of COVID-19. If successful, we could offer a drug in the earliest stages of the infection and cut the number of people who need hospital treatment."

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