

New study to assess the efficacy of ivermectin against COVID-19

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Team of the SAINT clinical trial at Clínica Universidad de Navarra and Barcelona Institute for Global Health (ISGlobal). Credit: Clínica Universidad de Navarra

Clínica Universidad de Navarra and the Barcelona Institute for Global Health (ISGlobal), a centre supported by the "la Caixa" Foundation, have launched a clinical trial to investigate the efficacy of ivermectin against COVID-19. The aim of the study, carried out in collaboration with Idifarma, is to determine whether administration of ivermectin is associated with a shorter viral clearance time.

"Ivermectin has been shown to have an antiviral effect against other single-chain RNA viruses, including dengue and [yellow fever](#), and it has successfully inhibited the replication of those viruses in vitro," explained Carlos Chaccour, a specialist affiliated with Clínica Universidad de Navarra and ISGlobal and principal investigator for the new study. "We are also interested in assessing the drug's immunomodulatory role because one of the major problems with the SARS CoV-2 virus is the disordered [immune response](#) it causes."

Ivermectin was recently shown to inhibit the

replication of SARS-CoV-2 in vitro at very high doses, but this effect has not yet been studied in vivo. The new study will investigate this question in a randomised trial. Twenty-four patients with mild disease and no risk factors will be given a single oral dose of ivermectin or placebo less than 48 hours after the onset of symptoms.

These newly diagnosed patients will not require hospitalisation, so follow-up will be carried out in their homes during their period of self-isolation. "We will give [patients](#) a single dose when they come to the clinic for a diagnostic test," explained Chaccour. "This will be followed by a month-long period of home-based follow-up, during which we will take five nasal swabs and monitor their symptoms. This will allow us to see whether [ivermectin](#) helps to clear the infection more quickly." The SARS-CoV 2 Ivermectin Navarra ISGlobal Trial (SAINT) is being funded by Clínica Universidad de Navarra and ISGlobal.

All participants will be recruited from Clínica Universidad de Navarra in Pamplona and their immune response will be jointly analysed by the Clínica and ISGlobal.

Provided by Barcelona Institute for Global Health

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