

Clinical trial underway to test nitric oxide in COVID-19 patients

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Doctors at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) are

enrolling patients in an international clinical trial to find out if inhaled nitric oxide benefits those with novel coronavirus (COVID-19) who have severely damaged lungs.

Right now, there are no approved treatments for the illness caused by COVID-19. The severe form of lung failure—[acute respiratory distress syndrome](#)—is the leading cause of death in COVID-19. Nitric oxide has been found to improve [blood flow](#) in areas of the lungs still receiving air, increasing the amount of oxygen in the blood stream.

Along with being used to treat failing lungs, [nitric oxide](#) has been found to have antiviral properties against coronaviruses. That was shown during the 2002 to 2003 severe acute respiratory syndrome outbreak, which was caused by a coronavirus similar to the one that causes COVID-19. Any COVID-19 patient in UAB's intensive care unit who is using a ventilator to breathe may qualify for the study.

"This trial will allow the sickest COVID-19 patients at UAB access to a rescue therapy that may have antiviral benefits in addition to improving the status of lungs," Vibhu Parcha, M.D., research fellow in the UAB Division of Cardiovascular Disease, said in a university news release.

More information: [More Information](#)

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