

EU drug agency recommends approving COVID-19 treatment

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The European Union's drugs agency on Monday recommended approving the use of an anti-inflammatory medicine to treat adults hospitalized with severe COVID-19.

The European Medicines Agency decision, which has to be confirmed by the E.U.'s executive commission, extends the use of the drug

RoActemra, made by Swiss pharmaceuticals giant Roche, that is currently used to treat forms of arthritis.

The Amsterdam-based EMA said it can now be used on adult COVID-19 patients who are being treated with corticosteroids and require supplemental oxygen or mechanical ventilation. The drug, given through an IV, tamps down a protein called interleukin-6 that's often found in excess in COVID-19 patients.

The agency said a study of 4,116 hospitalized adults with severe COVID-19 showed that treatment with RoActemra in addition to standard treatment reduced the risk of death when compared with [standard treatment](#) alone.

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