

Searching for coronavirus ‘antidote’ in the blood of former patients

Hospitals in New York City are gearing up to use the blood of people who have recovered from COVID-19 as a possible antidote for the disease. Researchers hope that the century-old approach of infusing patients with the antibody-laden blood of those who have survived an infection will help the metropolis — now the US epicentre of the outbreak — to avoid the fate of Italy.

...

The convalescent-plasma approach has also seen modest success during past severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Ebola outbreaks — but US researchers are hoping to increase the value of the treatment by selecting donor [blood](#) that is packed with antibodies and giving it to the patients who are most likely to benefit.

A key advantage to convalescent plasma is that it’s available immediately, whereas drugs and vaccines take months or years to develop. Infusing blood in this way seems to be relatively safe, provided that it is screened for viruses and other infectious agents. Scientists who have led the charge to use plasma want to deploy it now as a stopgap measure, to keep serious infections at bay and hospitals afloat as a tsunami of cases comes crashing their way.

[Read the original post](#)