



What is Paxlovid, the drug Biden is taking after testing positive for COVID-19?

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President Joe Biden tested positive for COVID-19 Thursday morning, according to White House officials.

According to White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre, the president experienced "very mild symptoms" and started taking Paxlovid, an antiviral drug intended to reduce the severity of symptoms.

Dr. Jeffrey Singer from the Cato Institute says that Paxlovid is "89% effective in preventing severe enough disease to go to the hospital or die in particularly high-risk people."

Singer says that Paxlovid can interact with certain medications.

"In the case of President Biden, he's on a statin drug and he's on a blood thinner, both of which have to be stopped during the five days that you take the Paxlovid," said Singer. "You just need to know what drugs a person is taking before you prescribe the Paxlovid."

The Food and Drug Administration authorized pharmacists to prescribe Paxlovid last month, a move the American Medical Association objected to.

"While the majority of COVID-19 positive patients will benefit from Paxlovid, it is not for everyone and prescribing it requires knowledge of a patient's medical history, as well as clinical monitoring for side effects and follow-up care to determine whether a patient is improving — requirements far beyond a pharmacist's scope and training," AMA President Jack Resneck Jr., MD, said in a statement.

Singer said the AMA was "acting territorial" when it comes to prescribing Paxlovid.

"Pharmacists are allowed by many states to prescribe birth control pills, HIV pre- and post-exposure prophylaxis, they can give vaccinations. In fact, they are experts in knowing which drugs interact with which drug so I can't tell you how many times as a doctor, I've consulted a pharmacist before I prescribe a drug to make sure that it doesn't interact with any of the other

medications the patient is on because they know this kind of stuff. So I can't see a justification for for the AMA," said Singer.