

International study shows hydroxychloroquine does not reduce Covid-19 deaths

Hydroxychloroquine, the drug touted by former US President Donald Trump as a 'game changer', does not reduce deaths from the virus and may even cause unwanted damage, recent studies have found.



Hydroxychloroquine does not reduce death in Covid-19 cases

According to a *Cochrane Review* [report](#), the drug probably does not reduce the number of people needing mechanical ventilation.

Senior author, Dr Tom Fletcher, said:

“ The review should put a line under using this drug to treat Covid-19. But some countries and health providers are still caught up in the earlier hype and prescribing the drug. We hope this review will help these practices end soon. ”

The findings are contained in the study published by authors based in India, South Africa, and the United Kingdom, who undertook the systematic review of studies that used chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine for treating or preventing Covid-19 disease.

In addition, they note that no new trials of hydroxychloroquine or chloroquine for treating Covid-19 should be started the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC) says. “They searched for studies that examined giving chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine to people with Covid-19; people at risk of being exposed to the virus; and people who had been exposed to the virus.”

'Game changer' claims false

The public demand for a Covid-19 cure fuelled speculation that the drug might be effective based on unreliable research that did not meet the inclusion criteria of this review.

“The then US President Trump declared chloroquine a ‘game changer’ about a year ago, leading to global demand and confusion. The research community rapidly organised large trials, which demonstrated no evidence of an effect, and these trials are summarised in this review.”

The council said the review authors included 14 relevant studies of which 12 were studies of chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine used to treat Covid-19 in 8 569 adults.

Meanwhile, the two studies focused on whether hydroxychloroquine prevents Covid-19 in 3,346 adults who had been exposed to the virus but had no symptoms of infection.

This included research from different countries, four in China and one each from Brazil, Egypt, Iran, Spain, Taiwan, the United Kingdom and North America and a global study in 30 countries.

According to the local author from Cochrane South Africa, Tamara Kredo, this review offers conclusive evidence that hydroxychloroquine has no impact on clinically important outcomes for both the prevention and treatment of Covid-19.

“It is also likely that hydroxychloroquine caused more unwanted effects than placebo in the trials undertaken,” she said.

“I think this underlines the importance of ensuring that we have reliable evidence even in an emergency situation like this pandemic where there is public pressure for rapid treatments and prevention options,” Kredo says.

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