



Review Article

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Hydroxychloroquine: A game changer for the novel COVID-19?

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Abstract

One of the best known anti-malarial drugs hydroxychloroquine a derivative of chloroquine is an economical drug with fewer side effects to the human body. The drug has already been known since long for its anti-malarial effects but it has gain notability after being reducing the time of recovery of patients who had tested positive for the novel coronavirus. Although many of these are under laboratory testing and no human clinical trials have been conducted to prove its efficacy against the virus. The results of hydroxychloroquine have shown a significant reduction in infection against the virus in countries like Wuhan, China, and France. Hence, these results have encouraged the drug regulatory of several other countries for the approval of this drug. This will give a short review regarding the use of hydroxychloroquine against the novel COVID-19.

Keywords: Hydroxychloroquine, SARS-CoV2, Anti malarial, WHO, Cardiac effect, CDC

INTRODUCTION

The severe acute respiratory syndrome also officially known by the name of coronavirus or COVID-19 is a zoonotic disease that originated in Wuhan, China. The disease was officially declared to be pandemic on March 11, 2020, by the WHO. Although World Health Organization (WHO), Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and U.S Food and drug administration (FDA) have not given any statement regarding any vaccine or drug to be efficient against the novel coronavirus. But, apart from this hydroxychloroquine is one of the most debatable drugs in the market nowadays to prove its effectiveness and use to treat the novel coronavirus.

Various trials have been initiated by the researchers. The drug shows interferon blockage activity and declines the response of the immune system towards infection caused by viruses. The hyperactive immune system is accountable for pneumonia and the SARS- CoV-2 infection. As such, there is no evidence which states that hydroxychloroquine can be used to treat the COVID-19 infection.

But, yes this drug has been proven by Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) to be used as prophylaxis or as prevention only by the medical fraternity which includes doctors, nurses, pharmacists and other paramedical staff associated with the healthcare system who engage in various hospital activities and are in frontline dealing with the COVID infected patients. This drug has also been categorized under schedule H1 by the Union Health Ministry which denoted that the drug can only be sold on prescription of a registered medical practitioner. Since no other treatment is currently available for this coronavirus and the healthcare workers are being exposed daily, HCQ is playing a key role in modulating the response of immune system towards the virus and protecting the staff [1,2].

Its usage is restricted to a certain group of people because of its known side effects. The extensive usage of HCQ may give rise to many other known and unknown complications, especially in a vulnerable population. It can lead to the problem in pulsation, fall in blood pressure or neuron rupture in extreme cases.

This drug requires close monitoring in patients with cardio risk and diabetes [3].

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CONCLUSION

No therapeutic measures are available yet for COVID-19 neither HCQ is the game-changer. It is just used as prophylaxis for the medical fraternity. No sufficient data is available which claims its use for curing the pandemic caused due to this virus. Only basic life support measures are taken as a symptomatic cure. HCQ also requires close monitoring regarding the mental and visual disturbance. No vaccination is currently available only social distancing and following the basic rules recommended by WHO can protect your self from getting infected.

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