



What your doctor may not know

Psychiatric Drug Facts

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Did President Trump Promote a Killer Drug by Taking Hydroxychloroquine?

by **Peter R. Breggin, MD and Ginger Breggin**

Since May 18, 2020, President Trump has been accused of killing people by major media for announcing that he has been taking hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) for two weeks to prevent the occurrence of COVID-19. Even the usually calm Neil Cavuto on Fox News accused the president of killing people by promoting the medication: “It will kill you. I cannot stress this enough. It will kill you.” Fortunately, the thoughtful Fox News doctor, Marc Siegel, afterward supported the President’s use of the drug and affirmed that it saved the life of his 96-year-old father. Today, May 19, 2020 shortly after 4 pm in Washington DC, Trump explained on television he and his doctor made the decision because he had been in close contact with two people who tested positive for the coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2.

Worldwide Use of HCQ

Has Trump gone overboard, taking hydroxychloroquine, and promoting it? Hydroxychloroquine is the most widely used drug worldwide to treat COVID-19 with many doctors reporting it is the best drug available. A March 27, 2020 worldwide survey headlined, “Doctors Rate Hydroxychloroquine Most Effective Therapy for Coronavirus Infection.” India found hydroxychloroquine so essential to saving the lives of its citizens that for a time it stopped exporting it and more recently has been sending it to Africa in the “war against the coronavirus.”

The US lags behind many other nations in using HCQ because of the politically-driven negative PR in this country, but its use remains extensive. [Reuters reported](#) , “Doctors and pharmacists from more than half a dozen large healthcare systems in New York, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Ohio, Washington and California told Reuters they are routinely using hydroxychloroquine on patients hospitalized with COVID-19.”

A So-Called VA Study Claims that HCQ Kills

A negative study using Veterans Administration data is being used by many, including Neil Cavuto on the air, to prove that hydroxychloroquine kills people. We [published a report and a video](#) showing that the study was extremely biased, poorly done, and pure junk. Furthermore, despite the study’s poorly presented data, our reanalysis showed that the combination of hydroxychloroquine with azithromycin was saving many lives because, *when given to the sickest patients of all, the death rate dropped to that of the healthiest patients.*

A day or two after our analysis of the so-called VA study, [the Secretary of the VA, Robert Wilkie](#), made the TV rounds, rejecting the study, and pointing out the data had been obtained and used by people unaffiliated with the VA. He endorsed HCQ, stating the VA was using it effectively to treat COVID-19. Today, after the President made his remarks, the VA Secretary stated on TV that men like himself who had been in the military frequently used the medication and that on any given day the VA dispenses 42,000 doses.

The FDA’s Political Intervention

The FDA is no watchdog; it is the lapdog of the pharmaceutical industry. In [its negative pronouncement about the cheap](#) , inexpensive and widely used drug, hydroxychloroquine, the FDA presented only hearsay evidence of reports of cardiac problems for which it gave not a single citation or piece of evidence. Meanwhile, the FDA [has long been critical of using its reporting system](#) to draw conclusions of the kind it drew against hydroxychloroquine. Since it made no reports available, the FDA clearly did not want scrutiny of the supposedly alarming data. They wanted us to run scared without providing particulars.

The Safety of HCQ

In my many decades of experience reviewing drug side effects, hydroxychloroquine is one of the safest drugs I have evaluated. The drug has been FDA approved for 65 years, so its safety profile is well-known. The [FDA-approved Full Prescribing Information](#) has no black box warning about lethal risks as many other drugs do, including many psychiatric drugs.

Hydroxychloroquine is on the World Health Organization’s [List of Essential Medicines](#) . It has been known for decades as being among the safest and most effective medicines needed in any

health system. Almost all problems are with larger or more long-term amounts than used to treat the current epidemic. Deaths are extremely rare, and the [WHO states the following](#),

“Despite hundreds of millions of doses administered in the treatment of malaria, there have been no reports of sudden unexplained death associated with quinine, chloroquine or amodiaquine, although each drug causes QT/QTc interval prolongation.”

The cardiac issue, [QT interval prolongation](#) that everyone warns about, is extraordinarily common—*found in 247 other drugs including many commonly used psychiatric drugs*. Many US doctors who use it for various FDA approved purposes—for malaria, for lupus, for rheumatoid arthritis—have announced publicly that they have never seen a death from it over many years.

Trump’s Drug Vs. Fauci’s Drug

Anthony Fauci, Director of NIH’s Institute for Allergy and Infectious Diseases, has led the [criticism of Trump’s enthusiasm](#) for hydroxychloroquine.

How safe is Fauci’s drug remdesivir? Remdesivir had to be stopped from being used in [its Ebola trial](#). Compared to other antiviral drugs in the same study, it had an excessive mortality rate. A recent controlled clinical trial for remdesivir, published in [Lancet](#), showed it had no good effects and that 5% of the people became much worse when taking it. *Fauci meanwhile has never released adverse event data from his recent trial, an enormous issue that most readers will be learning for the first time in this report. We have previously discussed these findings in a reported titled “Fauci’s Remdesivir: Inadequate to Treat COVID-19 and Potentially Lethal.”* [Our report and PDFs](#) of the published clinical trials can be found on our [Coronavirus Resource Center](#) on www.breggin.com.

Right now, hydroxychloroquine is the best drug available for treating COVID-19 and its safety profile is remarkably good. Compared to it, Fauci’s remdesivir is a potentially deadly, highly experimental, unproven drug. So who is killing people, Trump by promoting a drug commonly used worldwide for treating COVID-19 with a good safety profile, or Fauci promoting remdesivir which remains experimental, has potentially lethal adverse effects, and whose safety profile in the recently aborted NIH trial has never been released by Fauci?

Coronavirus Resource Center