

NEWS | JULY 21, 2020

## Yale professor says hydroxychloroquine could save 100,000 lives — but it's being stifled by a 'propaganda war'

'It's a political drug now'



Photo by GEORGE FREY/AFP via Getty Images

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Yale epidemiology professor Dr. Harvey Risch said Tuesday that he believes the President Trump-touted drug, hydroxychloroquine, could save up to 100,000 lives if used properly to treat the coronavirus.

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Speaking [with Fox News' Laura Ingraham](#) Monday night, Risch insisted that the controversial drug is proven to be effective against the disease and safe for people to use, but lamented that it has become the victim of a "propaganda war."

"It's a political drug now, not a medical drug," Risch said. "I think we are basically fighting a propaganda war against the medical facts, and that colors not just population people, how they think about it, but doctors, as well.

"There are many doctors that I've gotten hostile remarks [from] saying that all the evidence is bad for it and, in fact, that is not true at all," he said. "All the evidence is actually good for it when it's used in outpatient uses.

"Nevertheless, the only people who actually see that are a whole pile of doctors who are actually on the front lines treating those patients across the country — and they are the ones who are at risk of being forced not to do it."

All in all, Risch asserted that "75,000 to 100,000 lives would be saved" if the drug was used widely and perhaps as a prophylactic, meaning in a preventative manner.

Risch, who is a researcher at the Yale School of Public Health, [published a study](#) into the efficacy of hydroxychloroquine in early June and concluded that the drug should be made "widely available."

At the time, he said that the drug, in combination with "azithromycin or doxycycline and probably with zinc," could serve as a "game changer" in the fight against the pandemic.

Hydroxychloroquine was touted by President Trump early on in the pandemic despite warnings from some public health officials that the drug's effectiveness against COVID-19 was anecdotal. Ever since, it has become a hot-button political issue.

After fast-tracking approval in March, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration [pulled its emergency use authorization](#) in June after studies showed it was ineffective and potentially dangerous.

One of the major studies causing concern, however, was [retracted](#) after the data it was based on was found to be inaccurate.

Since then, [a new study](#) conducted by the Henry Ford Health System found that "treatment with hydroxychloroquine cut the death rate significantly in sick patients hospitalized with COVID-19."