

Use of Antimalarial Drugs in Covid-19

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Abstract

During the recent pandemic of SARS-Covid-2 has made the clinicians to use other drugs that are known to be effective for other medical conditions. Among these repurposed therapeutic agents are the antimalarial drug chloroquine and its analogue hydroxy chloroquine, which is used for the treatment of autoimmune diseases such as SLE (systemic lupus erythematosus) and rheumatoid arthritis. These drugs have been noted having some antiviral properties in laboratory conditions. So, long story short these drugs along with a macrolide (azithromycin) were used extensively in the symptomatic treatment regimn of covid-19.

But the results came out however are a reminder of the risks of deciding to use medicines without clear evidence of their benefits and risks.

Keywords: SARS-Covid-19; Antimalarial drugs; Hydroxy chloroquine

Data

This study was the largest observational study so far, it combined data from 15,000 covid-19 patients at 671 hospitals on 6 continents who were treated with the drugs and those patients were compared to 81000 patients who had covid-19 but did not receive these drugs [1-4].

Findings

One of the findings of the current use of these medications is hard to ignore is increased risk of dangerous disturbances in heart rhythms;as these are the known side effects of both the drugs.

It appears that patients on hydroxy chloroquine had double the risk of ventricular arrhythmias.

Patients on chloroquine had triple that risk.

When macrolide antibiotic such as azithromycin was added, the risk jumped to fivefold.

Result

Based upon the upper mentioned findings no one should take chloroquine and hydroxy chloroquine with or without an antibiotic until and unless they are in a randomized controlled trial. It should not be used in the general population for the treatment of SARS- Covid-19 infection.

References

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