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Editorial

Hydroxychloroquine/ chloroquine as a treatment choice or prophylaxis for Covid-19 at the primary care level in developing countries: A Primum non Nocere dilemma

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ABSTRACT

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) warned against the use of Hydroxychloroquine or chloroquine for Covid-19 outside of a hospital or a clinical trial setting due to the risk of QT interval prolongation, ventricular tachycardia and the increased risk of these complications when combined with some antibiotics such as azithromycin. Several studies have reported no benefit of Hydroxychloroquine or chloroquine, when used alone or with a macrolide in COVID-19 hospitalized patients.

Despite these warnings, in several developing countries the official guidelines for treatment of Covid-19 patients at the primary care level recommend Hydroxychloroquine and azithromycin, among other treatments, as the first-choice for mild symptomatic Covid-19 patients, asymptomatic contacts or for prophylaxis. In our opinion there is a primum non nocere dilemma during this Covid-19 pandemic. In order to solve this bioethical problem, we strongly recommend that a randomized controlled trial in a primary care setting be carried out as a matter of urgency in these areas of the world.

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