



March 22, 2020

Dear Colleagues:

I want to alert you to misinformation that is being widely reported by news organizations and on social media regarding the use of some antimalarial drugs and some antibiotics to treat COVID-19. Currently, there is no conclusive evidence that drugs such as hydroxychloroquine or azithromycin are effective in the treatment of COVID-19. Research is underway to test these drugs and newer antiviral agents, but there is no definitive evidence of effective treatment at this time. In the meantime, we must ensure that drugs such as hydroxychloroquine remain available to treat diseases and conditions for which there is scientific proof that they are effective including malaria, lupus and rheumatoid arthritis.

At this time we have no US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved drugs specifically for the treatment of patients with COVID-19. Clinical management includes infection prevention and control measures and supportive care, including supplementary oxygen and mechanical ventilatory support when indicated.

Until there is a drug approved for treatment of COVID-19 or a vaccine to prevent it, we must remain vigilant in our efforts to prevent spread of the virus through frequent and thorough handwashing, proper use of PPE, social distancing, and isolation and quarantine of individuals diagnosed with or exposure to COVID-19.

Thank you for your tireless efforts to care for your patients while working with public health to prevent further spread of COVID-19 in our communities.

Sincerely,

Kathleen E. Toomey, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner & State Health Officer

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