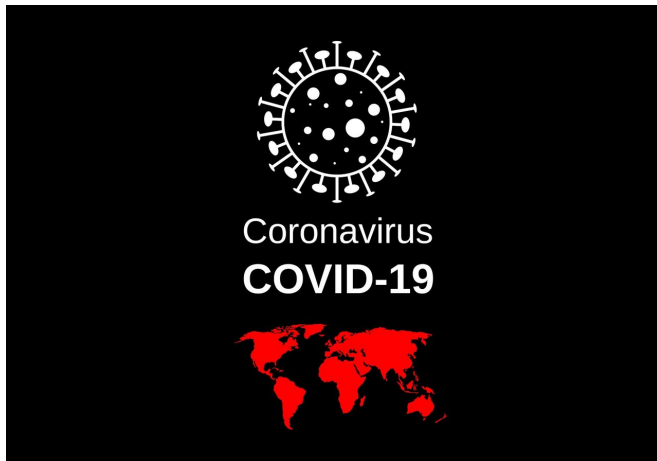


# Trial shows hydroxychloroquine does not prevent COVID-19 in health care workers

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University of Minnesota Medical School physician researchers studied hydroxychloroquine as a treatment to prevent COVID-19 for those with high-risk for exposure to the virus—health care workers.

The pre-exposure prophylaxis trial results, which were published in *Clinical Infectious Diseases*, determined that taking 400mg of [hydroxychloroquine](#) once or twice weekly did not prevent the development of COVID-19 in [health care workers](#) better than the [placebo](#).

"This randomized placebo-controlled trial launched on April 6, with the objective of evaluating whether or not hydroxychloroquine taken once or twice weekly in health care workers at high risk for COVID-19 exposure could prevent COVID-19 infection," said principal investigator Radha Rajasingham, MD, an infectious diseases physician and researcher at the U of M Medical School.

The double-blind trial enrolled 1,483 health care workers and first responders from across the U.S.

and Canada. Participants were randomly assigned to receive once-weekly hydroxychloroquine, twice-weekly hydroxychloroquine or placebo. Participants were followed for a minimum of four weeks and up to twelve weeks to evaluate who developed COVID-19.

Overall, 7.9% assigned the placebo developed COVID-19, while 5.9% assigned hydroxychloroquine developed COVID-19. Those results were not statistically significant, meaning there was not a meaningful difference between hydroxychloroquine and the placebo. Side effects were reported in 21% of participants assigned the placebo; 31% in the once-weekly hydroxychloroquine group and 36% in the twice-weekly hydroxychloroquine group. The most common side effects were nausea, upset stomach and diarrhea. There was no increased risk of serious [side effects](#) or cardiac complications from taking hydroxychloroquine compared to the placebo.

**More information:** Radha Rajasingham et al, Hydroxychloroquine as pre-exposure prophylaxis for COVID-19 in healthcare workers: a randomized trial, *Clinical Infectious Diseases* (2020). [DOI: 10.1093/cid/ciaa1571](#)

Provided by University of Minnesota

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