

Chloroquine drug

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Source: *The Hindu and India Today*

Recently a senior citizen in the US state of Arizona has died after he took a drug (chloroquine) one with the same active ingredient as malaria drugs named by US President Donald Trump as potential treatments for Covid-19.

What is chloroquine?

Chloroquine (also known as chloroquine phosphate) is an antimalarial medicine. It is available in the United States by prescription only. It is sold under the brand name Aralen, and it is also sold as a generic medicine.

Status of the drug in India

The use of hydroxyl chloroquine as a prophylaxis for the high-risk population faced with the SARS-CoV-2 infection was recommended by the Indian Council of Medical Research's (ICMR) national task force.

ICMR Director General Balram Bhargava told a press briefing that "Only asymptomatic health care workers involved in the care of suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 and asymptomatic household contacts of laboratory-confirmed cases should be allowed to use this. The protocol recommended by the National Taskforce has been approved by the Drug Controller General of India for restricted use in emergency situations."

About Malaria

- It is a mosquito-borne infectious disease that affects humans and other animals.
- Malaria causes symptoms that typically include fever, tiredness, vomiting, and headaches.
- It is a disease caused by a plasmodium parasite,

transmitted by the bite of infected mosquitoes.

- The severity of malaria varies based on the species of plasmodium.
- Symptoms are chills, fever and sweating, usually occurring a few weeks after being bitten.
- People travelling to areas where malaria is common typically take protective drugs before, during and after their trip. Treatment includes antimalarial drugs.