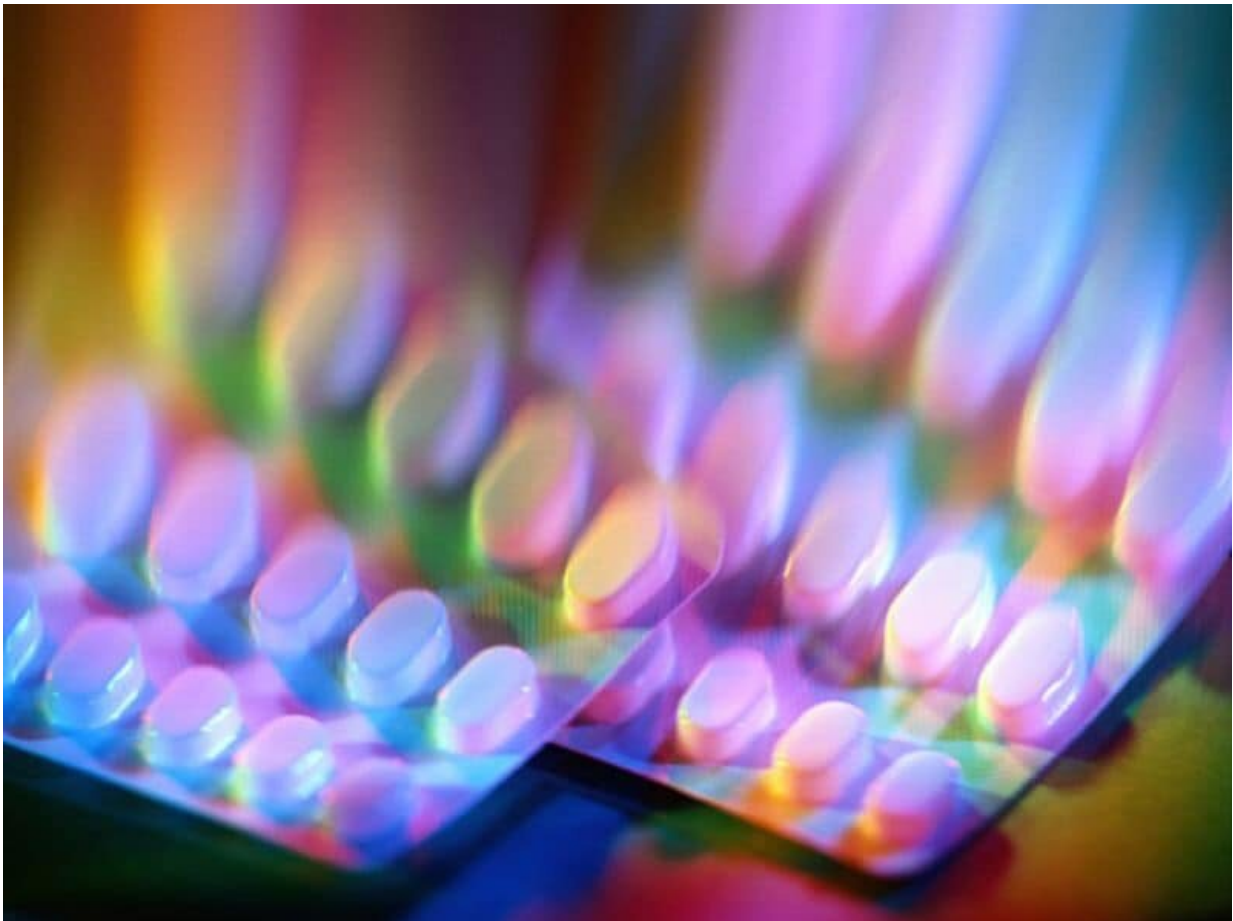


# Chloroquine COVID-19 trial stopped after patient deaths

April 14 2020

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A study of chloroquine in novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) patients

was halted due to potentially deadly side effects.

Researchers in Brazil were testing [chloroquine](#) in 81 hospitalized COVID-19 patients. About half were prescribed 450 mg twice daily for five days, and the others were prescribed 600 mg for 10 days, *The New York Times* reported. But within three days, some patients taking the higher dose developed serious heart rhythm disorders, resulting in 11 deaths. The researchers immediately stopped the higher-dose part of the trial. The trial did not have enough patients in the lower-dose trial to conclude whether chloroquine was effective in patients with severe cases of COVID-19.

"To me, this study conveys one useful piece of information, which is that chloroquine causes a dose-dependent increase in an abnormality in the electrocardiogram that could predispose people to [sudden cardiac death](#)," David Juurlink, M.D., an internist and the head of the division of clinical pharmacology at the University of Toronto, told *The Times*.

Patients in the trial also received the antibiotic azithromycin, which also has heart rhythm disorder risks. Hospitals in the United States are using azithromycin to treat COVID-19 [patients](#), often in combination with hydroxychloroquine, according to *The Times*.

**More information:** [The New York Times Article](#)

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