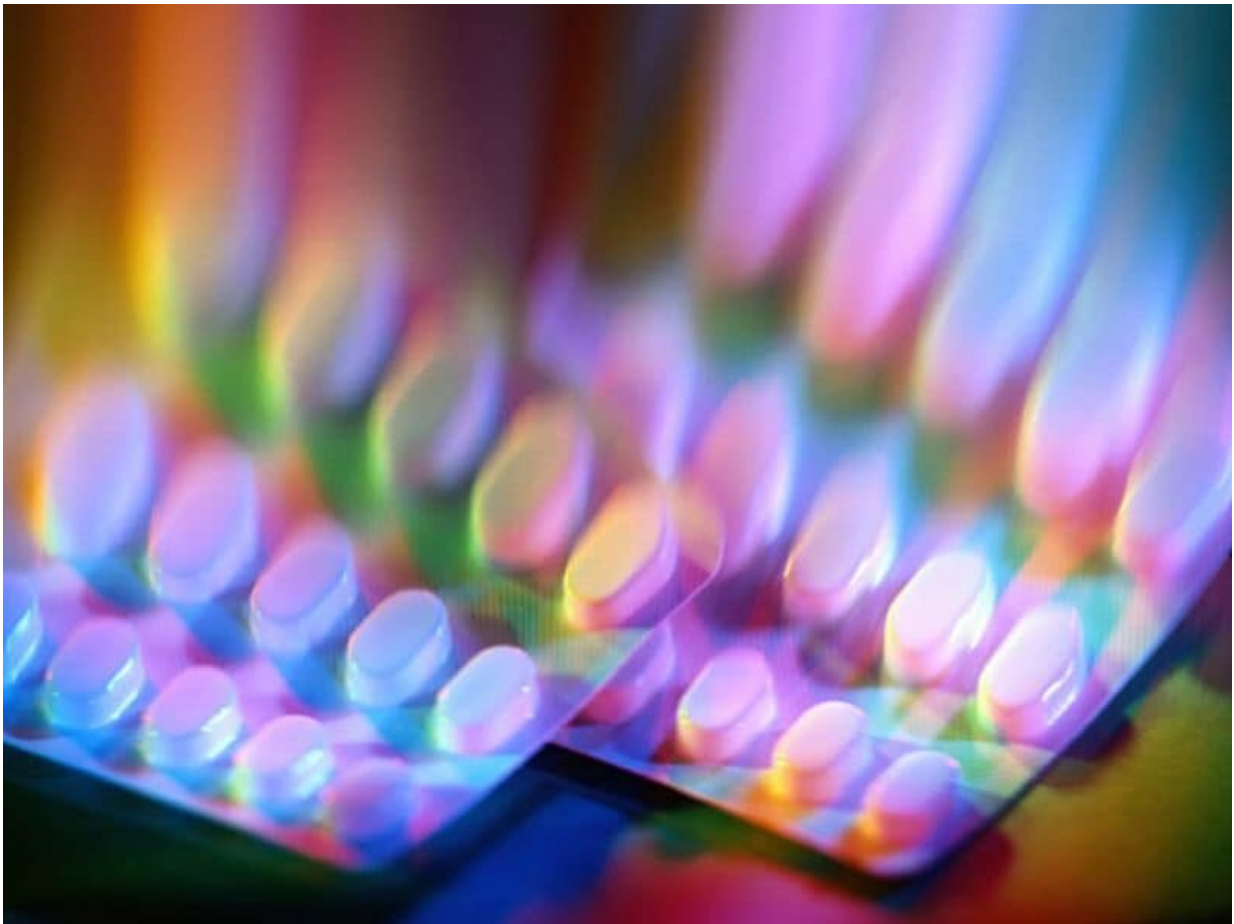


## February to March 2020 saw surge in hydroxychloroquine prescriptions

July 8 2020

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(HealthDay)—From February to March 2020, there was a considerable

increase in the number of patients receiving outpatient prescriptions for hydroxychloroquine, chloroquine, and azithromycin, according to a research letter published online July 6 in *JAMA Internal Medicine*.

Nadine Shehab, Pharm.D., M.P.H., from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention COVID-19 Response team in Atlanta, and colleagues quantified changes in outpatient prescriptions for hydroxychloroquine, chloroquine, and azithromycin using data from the IQVIA Total Patient Tracker. Monthly hydroxychloroquine and chloroquine dispensing was identified from Oct. 1, 2019, to March 31, 2020.

The researchers found that the estimated number of patients receiving hydroxychloroquine and chloroquine prescriptions was stable from October 2019 through February 2020 (mean, 383,685 and 1,839 patients per month, respectively). The estimated number of patients receiving dispensed hydroxychloroquine and chloroquine prescriptions increased 86.2 and 158.6 percent, respectively (from 367,346 to 683,999 and from 2,346 to 6,066, respectively). Of those receiving hydroxychloroquine prescriptions, there was a 1,044 percent increase in the estimated [number](#) receiving both hydroxychloroquine and azithromycin (from 8,885 to 101,681). For all [states](#) and Washington, D.C., there were increases in the estimated numbers of patients receiving dispensed [hydroxychloroquine](#) or chloroquine.

"As COVID-19 continues to spread, ongoing assessment of the use of potential therapies will be essential to inform safe and appropriate treatment, along with prompt adverse event reporting," the authors write.

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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