

Increase seen in hydroxychloroquine Rx by nonroutine specialists

September 9 2020



(HealthDay)—In March 2020, compared with March 2019, there was an

80-fold increase in new prescriptions for hydroxychloroquine by specialists who did not typically prescribe these medications, according to research published in the Sept. 4 issue of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

In response to reports of notable increases in prescriptions for hydroxychloroquine and chloroquine as potential treatment and prophylaxis for COVID-19, Lara Bull-Otterson, Ph.D., from the CDC COVID-19 Emergency Response Team, and colleagues analyzed outpatient retail pharmacy transaction data to examine potential differences in prescriptions dispensed by provider type during January to June 2020 versus the same period in 2019.

The researchers found that [primary care providers](#) and [specialists](#) who routinely prescribed hydroxychloroquine, including rheumatologists and dermatologists, accounted for about 97 percent of new prescriptions before 2020. New prescriptions by specialists who did not typically prescribe these medications increased from 1,143 to 75,569 prescriptions from February to March 2020, an 80-fold increase from March 2019.

"Although dispensing of hydroxychloroquine or chloroquine [prescriptions](#) has been declining since March 2020, continued attention to updated clinical guidance, especially by nonroutine prescribers, will help safeguard supplies and ensure safe use of these medications for patients with approved indications," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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Citation: Increase seen in hydroxychloroquine Rx by nonroutine specialists (2020, September 9)

retrieved 20 June 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-09-hydroxychloroquine-rx-nonroutine-specialists.html>

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