

The US FDA is experimenting with treatment of Covid-19 with anti-malarial drugs and human cures

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Yesterday during a White House meeting, US President Donald Trump said that the Food and Drug Administration had approved a Covid-19 treatment using chloroquine - a drug previously Used for malaria patients.

Today, however, Dr. Stephen Hahn, an FDA commissioner responsible for handling treatment and vaccination proposals for Covid-19, has to correct this information. The FDA is currently just reviewing a large-scale clinical trial of chloroquine, but hasn't officially approved it for Covid-19.

" In a short time, we are looking at approved drugs for other indications [used to treat other diseases, which can now be applied to Covid-19] ," said the physician. Hahn said.

" Many Americans have read the research and heard in the media about this chloroquine, an anti-malarial drug. It has been approved, as the president said, but it is to treat fever." cold and arthritis ".

Even so, Mr. Trump did not tell the back of the story. Instead, he said that chloroquine was approved for Covid-19, causing many people to misunderstand. CNN, The New York Times, and Forbes also published an update on this statement from the President today.

The FDA has not approved any treatments for Covid-19 yet, but they are testing them.



US President Donald Trump said chloroquine was approved by the FDA, but he did not say approval for the treatment of malaria and arthritis. Many people misunderstand the FDA has approved chloroquine as a drug to treat Covid-19. The truth is not so.

Stephen Hahn said chloroquine was just a drug the president "*wanted us to take a closer look*". The goal is to evaluate whether this drug should be widely used to treat Covid-19 patients.

Previously, chloroquine was known for its many short-term side effects such as nausea, diarrhea and tinnitus. Long-term use of this medication can impair vision. It is prohibited for use by pregnant women because it can cause birth defects in babies.

In order to answer whether chloroquine should be approved to treat Covid-19, the FDA will need to take its full steps.

*" Again, we want to do it [to assess chloroquine] in the context of a clinical trial, a major nationwide trial that can really collect information and answer questions. needs to be answered , "*said Dr. Hahn.

In addition to chloroquine, there is another potential treatment for Covid-19 that President Donald Trump mentioned. Remdesivir, a drug used to fight Ebola, is also being tested in Covid-19 patients and has shown positive results.

Remdesivir was developed by Gilead Science, a biotechnology company based in California, USA. The drug, which inhibits viral replication, has previously been tested in animals with several other corona virus strains including SARS and MERS.

Dr Hahn said remdesivir is also currently undergoing clinical trials, following the FDA's normal process for approval. Clinical trials were divided into two episodes.

For the first trial, researchers will select 400 patients with Covid-19 infection with severe clinical manifestations. These patients will be given remdesivir for 5 or 10 days.

The second trial recruited 600 patients with Covid-19 infection but had only moderate symptoms. They were also given remdesivir for 5 or 10 days for comparison.

In addition to the two drugs, Dr. Hahn also highlights another Covid-19 treatment trial that the FDA is investigating:

Use plasma taken from recovered blood of infected patients to transfer to patients who have not recovered. This dose of live medicine is expected to carry antibodies against the Covid-19 virus from people and help patients to develop their own immune response.

" There was an attempt to cross-treat, something called a newcomer's plasma ," Dr Hahn said. *"This is an interesting field."*

"If you were exposed to the corona virus and conquered it, then you would have no virus in the blood. Right now, we can collect your blood, [to concentrate and get the immunoglobulins used. "This is a possible treatment, because it can induce an immune response that could benefit the patient."

That said, all FDA-approved treatments for any disease can be used to treat Covid-19 in a " *compassionate* " situation, Dr. Hahn said. That is when doctors no longer have any other treatment options, they can assign patients a new drug being tested as a " *blessing*" way.

Going back to chloroquine, there are currently a lot of clinical trials done on this drug to treat Covid-19. A recent study by French and Vietnamese scientists has shown that chloroquine may also be combined with azithromycin antibiotics to increase the effectiveness of treatment.

This method shortens the amount of time corona virus exists in a patient. It only took about 5 days after the combination of chloroquine and azithromycin, all of the Covid-19 patients who participated in this trial were negative for the virus.

However, Dr. Hahn said that even if a drug has been approved for use in another disease such as chloroquine, it still needs to be clinically tested on Covid-19 patients, to ensure doctors will Use the right dose effectively without harming the health of the patient.

A previous study by the Wuhan Institute of Virology showed that an overdose of chloroquine, specifically 2 grams of this drug, could kill an adult.

See *Techcrunch, Bloomberg*

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