We have seen several instances now of prescribers sending scripts for hydroxychloroquine and azithromycin for positive COVID-19 cases to be treated outpatient. Please note the guidance from CDC and FDA about these medications and their safety risk when used individually and in combination. Tyson Drugs supports pharmacists in using their professional judgement just as you would any other prescription order. If a pharmacist chooses to fill the prescriptions, please consider the following documentation best practices:

1. Document conversation with prescriber regarding education on increased risk of QT prolongation and arrhythmias, discussing patient history of cardiac events, and MS Board of Pharmacy and FDA guidance that these are to be reserved for inpatient treatment that includes telemetry monitoring.
2. Document conversation with patient regarding side effects of each medication as well as the combination, including increased risk of QT prolongation and arrhythmias, assessing patient history of cardiac events.

**CDC FAQs for healthcare professionals**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/faq.html#treatment>

*Highlights:*

[One small study](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0924857920300996) reported that hydroxychloroquine alone or in combination with azithromycin reduced detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA in upper respiratory tract specimens compared with a non-randomized control group but did not assess clinical benefit . Hydroxychloroquine and azithromycin are associated with QT prolongation and caution is advised when considering these drugs in patients with chronic medical conditions (e.g. renal failure, hepatic disease) or who are receiving medications that might interact to cause arrhythmias.

Dosing regimen utilized in the study:

* hydroxychloroquine 200mg TID x 10 days
* azithromycin 500mg on day1 followed by 250mg per day, the next four days

**FDA Guidance – March 28, 2020**

<https://www.fda.gov/media/136534/download>

*Highlights:*

Based upon limited in-vitro and anecdotal clinical data in case series, chloroquine phosphate and hydroxychloroquine sulfate are currently recommended for treatment of ***hospitalized*** COVID-19 patients in several countries, and a number of national guidelines report incorporating recommendations regarding use of chloroquine phosphate or hydroxychloroquine sulfate in the setting of COVID-19. FDA encourages the conduct and participation in randomized controlled clinical trials that may produce evidence concerning the effectiveness of these products in treating COVID-19. FDA is issuing this EUA to facilitate the availability of chloroquine phosphate and hydroxychloroquine sulfate during the COVID-19 pandemic to treat patients for whom a clinical trial is not available, or participation is not feasible.

The chloroquine phosphate may only be used to treat adult and adolescent patients who weigh 50 kg or more and are ***hospitalized*** with COVID-19, for whom a clinical trial is not available, or participation is not feasible.

The hydroxychloroquine sulfate may only be used to treat adult and adolescent patients who weigh 50 kg or more ***hospitalized*** with COVID-19 for whom a clinical trial is not available, or participation is not feasible.

**MS Board of Pharmacy**

mbp.ms.gov/Pages/Chloroquine-and-Hydroxychloroquine-Information.aspx

*Highlights:*

If used, hydroxychloroquine and chloroquine should be restricted to patients who are ***admitted*** to hospitals with COVID-19 infections. The role of hydroxychloroquine and chloroquine in an individual patient’s care should be discussed ***with an infectious diseases physician at the healthcare facility***.

Medication side effects, drug interactions, contraindications, and laboratory monitoring requirements should also be considered when dispensing these medications for treatment of COVID-19. There is a potential for toxicity with these medications. Meeting those monitoring needs for patients could be limited in a community setting at the moment.

Other Tertiary Resource Pages that may be of benefit:

<https://www.pioneerrx.com/Web/covid-19-information-for-pharmacies/>

<https://www.covidbestpractices.com/>

