Coronavirus Disease 2019

Chloroquine and Hydroxychloroquine Information for Providers and Public Health Officials

Responding to COVID-19

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has learned of two people who ingested non-pharmaceutical chloroquine phosphate, a chemical for aquarium use that is commercially available at stores and internet websites. One of the individuals died shortly after arrival at a hospital. The second individual was critically ill.

Ohio Department of Health Director Amy Acton, M.D., MPH, strongly recommends that clinicians and public health officials take the following actions:

- Educate patients on the serious risks of misusing non-pharmaceutical chloroquine products and other aquarium use chemicals.
- Counsel your patients on the importance of taking medications only as prescribed and as directed by healthcare providers.
- Contact your local poison center (1-800-222-1222) to report cases and to obtain specific medical management of chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine poisoning.

Additional information:

- Chloroquine phosphate, when used without a prescription and supervision of a healthcare provider, can cause serious health consequences, including death. Chloroquine, and the related compound hydroxychloroquine, should be used only under the supervision of a healthcare provider as prescribed medication and according to instructions provided.

For more information, visit: coronavirus.ohio.gov
In overdose situations or when otherwise used inappropriately, these medications can lead to severe toxicity, including cardiac rhythm disturbances (such as prolonged QT), severe hypokalemia, cardiovascular collapse, seizures, coma, and death.

Inappropriate uses include taking commercially available non-pharmaceutical products, taking chloroquine phosphate or hydroxychloroquine sulfate without a prescription, and taking additional doses not recommended by a healthcare provider. Chloroquine phosphate has a narrow therapeutic index — it can be toxic at levels not much higher than those prescribed — which raises the risk of inadvertent overdose.

There are no routinely available pharmaceutical products that are FDA-approved for the prevention or treatment of COVID-19.

For additional information, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov.

For answers to your COVID-19 questions, call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).

If you or a loved one are experiencing anxiety related to the coronavirus pandemic, help is available. Call the Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990 (1-800-846-8517 TTY); connect with a trained counselor through the Ohio Crisis Text Line by texting the keyword “4HOPE” to 741 741; or call the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services help line at 1-877-275-6364 to find resources in your community.
Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Prevention

Protect yourself and others from COVID-19 by taking these precautions.

For additional information call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH or visit coronavirus.ohio.gov.

- Stay Home
- Practice Social Distancing
- Get Adequate Sleep and Eat Well-Balanced Meals
- Wash Hands Often with Water and Soap (20 seconds or longer)
- Dry Hands with a Clean Towel or Air Dry Your Hands
- Cover Your Mouth with a Tissue or Sleeve When Coughing or Sneezing
- Avoid Touching Your Eyes, Nose, or Mouth with Unwashed Hands or After Touching Surfaces
- Clean and Disinfect "High-Touch" Surfaces Often
- Call Before Visiting Your Doctor
- Practice Good Hygiene Habits

For more information, visit: coronavirus.ohio.gov