



Addressing the COVID-19 Crisis: An Open Forum Webinar Series for Pharmacists

April 23, 2020



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Dean and Professor
Loma Linda University School of Pharmacy
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Host and Moderator

Today's Focus:

Update on the most recent evidence for medications being studied for COVID-19

Highlight front-line perspectives of launching COVID-19 testing in a community pharmacy



Daniel Zlott, PharmD, BCOP
Vice President
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Medications for COVID-19



Beth Bryan, PharmD
Owner and Pharmacist
Surgoinville Pharmacy
Surgoinville, Tennessee

Guest Speaker



Ilisa BG Bernstein, PharmD, JD, FAPhA
Senior Vice President, Pharmacy Practice
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American Pharmacists Association

Subject Matter Expert: Q&A

Format for Today's Webinar

- 1:00 pm:** Introductions
- 1:05 pm:** Update on COVID-19 medications by Daniel Zlott, Vice President, Professional Education Resources, APhA
- 1:12 pm:** Discussion with Beth Bryan, Owner and Pharmacist, Surgoinsville Pharmacy, Tennessee
- 1:25 pm:** Open Forum: A Minute for Your Thoughts
- 1:50 pm:** Wrap Up: Review of APhA's Ongoing Activities and What's Coming

Medications in COVID-19: Hydroxychloroquine

- Initial claims regarding efficacy of Hydroxychloroquine(HCQ)/Azithromycin (AZM) based on increased rate of viral clearance compared to non-randomized controls¹
- Expansion of this data appeared to show promising results, however, there was no control arm in the expanded data²
- Results from several randomized controlled trials are now available:
 - 30 pts (HCQ vs standard of care [SOC])
 - 62 pts (HCQ vs SOC)
 - 150 pts (HCQ vs SOC)
- Data from VA – retrospective analysis

1. Gautret, et al. *Int J Antimicrob Agents* 2020; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijantimicag.2020.105949>

2. Gautret, et al. *Travel Medicine and Infectious Disease* 2020; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmaid.2020.101663>

Medications in COVID-19: Hydroxychloroquine

- Randomized Controlled Trial Outcomes:
 - 30 pt study: No difference in time to viral clearance between HCQ and SOC group¹
 - 62 pt study: Statistically significant improvement in time to resolution of Sx and increase rate of improvement of findings consistent with pneumonia on CT scan²
 - 150 pt study: No different in time to viral clearance or clinical outcomes in full population³
 - ❑ Statistically significant benefit in patient who had not received other anti-viral therapies
- VA Study⁴:
 - Increased risk of all-cause mortality in the HCQ group; No difference in mortality in the HCQ/AZM group as compared to the no-HCQ group
 - No differences in risk of ventilation across all groups
- Bottom Line: Additional data still needed

1. Chen, J et al. *J of Zhejiang university (Med Sci)* 2020;49(1):0-0

2. Chen, Z et al. *MedRxiv*. 2020; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1101/2020.03.22.20040758> [not peer reviewed]

3. Tang, et al. *MedRxiv*. 2020; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1101/2020.04.10.20060558> [not peer reviewed]

4. Magagnoli, et al. *MedRxiv*. 2020; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1101/2020.04.16.20065920> [not peer reviewed]

Medications in COVID-19 Remdesivir

- Early case reports showed promise
- Currently, best data comes from the compassionate use data¹:
 - Unrandomized, non-controlled case series
 - 61 pts who received remdesivir; data available in 53 pts
 - ☐ Different patient population than we've seen before:
 - 57% were on mechanical ventilation
 - 8% were receiving extracorporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO)
 - ☐ 68% of pts showed clinical improvement
 - 57% of intubated pts were extubated
 - ☐ 13% of pts died
- Bottom Line: Additional data still needed

1. Grein, et al. *NEJM* 2020; DOI: <http://doi.org/10.1056/NEJMoa2007016>

Medications in COVID-19 Tocilizumab

- Many of the severe symptoms of severe COVID-19 disease are thought to be due to immune-mediated organ damage
 - Evidence of cytokine release syndrome (CRS) in COVID-19 pts
 - Tocilizumab is an anti-IL-6 receptor monoclonal antibody that is commonly use to treat CRS in patient undergoing Chimeric Antigen Receptor T-cell therapy
- All currently available data comes from case reports or uncontrolled trials¹⁻³
 - All reports currently suggest benefit
 - ☐ Rapid reduction in fever
 - ☐ Resolution of respiratory symptoms
 - ☐ Decreased need for O2 support
 - ☐ Improvement in Chest CT findings
- The Bottom Line: Additional data still needed

1. Xu, et al. *ChinaXIV.org* 2020; <http://chinaxiv.org/abs/202003.00026>. Accessed 4/5/2020.
2. Ferrey, et al. *Am J Nephrol* 2020; <https://doi.org/10.1159/000507417>
3. Michot, et al. *Annals of Oncology* 2020; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annonc.2020.03.300>

Medications in COVID-19: Breaking News

The U.S. National Institutes of Health released COVID-19 treatment guidelines on Tuesday, 4/21

- Excellent review of the literature
- Spoiler: Currently, there isn't enough data to support the use of any agent in the treatment of any aspect of COVID-19 disease, aside from those medications that would be used as part of providing standard of care (i.e., antibiotics for bacterial co-infection, steroids for ARDS, etc.)
- A link to the NIH COVID-19 Treatment Guideline has been posted on APhA's COVID-19 resources for you

Discussion with Beth Bryan

Highlight front-line perspectives of launching
COVID-19 testing in a community pharmacy

Polling Question

I am interested in performing testing for COVID-19 in my community:

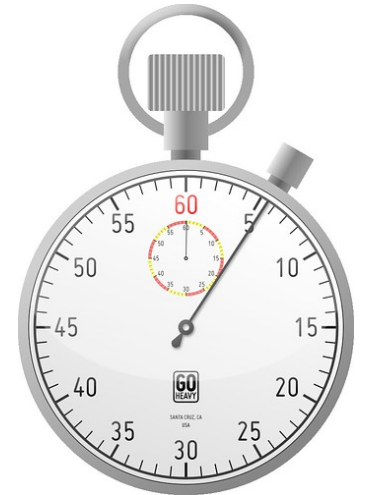
A. Yes

B. No

C. Not applicable to my position

Open Forum Ground Rules

- Use the **Questions** field on the GoToWebinar toolbar to submit comments and questions related to the topic discussion
- Individuals whose submissions are selected will be asked by the moderator to state the comment or question for the audience. The line for the individual will be unmuted to read their comment or question.
- To maximize the number of questions/comments addressed, a **60-second time limit** will be in effect for everyone to state their question or comment.
- We will try to get to as many comments and questions as possible. We have created a new forum for COVID-19 discussions where further discussion post-webinar. Information on participating in this forum will be provided at the end of the open forum.



Open Forum Discussion: A Minute for Your Thoughts *Comments, Questions, Feedback*

Review of APhA's Ongoing Activities and What's Coming

NEW Episodes – APhA's 15 on COVID-19

An education series designed to help you sort COVID-19 fact from fiction. Each episode is 15-20 minutes and provides CPE.

Episode 9: Hydroxychloroquine Updates

- <http://elearning.pharmacist.com/products/6079/15-on-covid-19-for-4-17-2020-hydroxychloroquine-updates?sectionId=4ab2d586-eb80-45ad-b125-8c13a5c21a81>

Episode 10: Hydroxychloroquine Updates: Part II

- <http://elearning.pharmacist.com/activity/enrollment?productId=15a3e0eb-97c2-4fe8-9794-29792ffdec5e>



Advocating for You on Coronavirus



In the past week....

- **Pharmacist Safety:**
 - **DEA:** APhA requested DEA to relax the requirement for a physical signature for the sale of OTC pseudoephedrine
- **Pharmacist COVID testing:** We are continuing to advocate to CMS, FDA, and Congress to reduce barriers to implementing HHS issued guidance authorizing licensed pharmacists to order and administer COVID-19 tests, including logistics, payment, billing, and more.
- **Compounding:** In response to a request by APhA and other pharmacy organizations, FDA issued temporary guidance permitting 503A compounding of certain medications for hospitalized patients without patient specific prescriptions, in specific situations.
- **Inappropriate Prescribing:** APhA, AMA, and ASHP issued an updated [Joint Statement of AMA, APhA, and ASHP on Ensuring Access to Medicines](#), with new information on inpatient use of certain medications, the distribution/supply chain, safety considerations and adverse event reporting, and need for evidence base

Practical Information for Pharmacists to Know Now



Check out [practice resources](#) on today's webinar topics:

- [Pharmacists' Authority to Test for COVID-19](#)
- [Demystifying Testing for the SARS CoV-2 Virus](#)
- [FAQs on the Medications Being Studied for Potential Use in COVID-19](#)
- [Key Facts About Commercially Available Medications Being Studied for COVID-19](#)

Key Facts About Commercially Available Medications Being Studied for COVID-19



FAQs on Medications Being Studied for Potential Use in the Treatment of COVID-19



Pharmacists' Authority to Test for COVID-19



Understanding HHS Guidance on Pharmacists' Authorization to Order and Administer Tests for the SARS-CoV-2 Virus

COVID-19: Demystifying Testing for the SARS-CoV-2 Virus



Frequently Asked Questions About COVID-19 Testing

Testing for COVID-19, caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, is rapidly evolving. As pharmacists work on the front line of the COVID-19 response, it is important to understand testing options, how to know which tests are recognized by FDA, and what qualifies a test to be provided in a pharmacy setting. The FDA's [Guidance on Diagnostic Testing for SARS-CoV-2](#) serves as a primary source for information on approval of COVID-19 tests.

What types of specimen are used to determine if someone has COVID-19?

- Testing for SARS-CoV-2 relies on two main types of specimen: respiratory or blood.
- Respiratory specimens may be collected via the following methods for each of the listed sites. The nasopharyngeal swab has been the preferred and most common respiratory specimen collection technique during the United States' initial response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Swab: nasopharyngeal, oropharyngeal, nasal, throat
 - Aspirate: nasopharyngeal, nasal, lower respiratory tract
 - Sputum
 - Bronchoalveolar lavage
 - Blood specimens range from a drop from a fingerstick to a more extensive blood draw by a trained phlebotomist, depending on the assay used in the test.

Who collects the specimen for COVID-19 testing?

Predominantly, trained health care professionals—including some pharmacists—have been collecting testing specimens, with the greatest number of specimens being collected by nasopharyngeal swab. On March 24, the CDC made changes to allow for self-collection of nasal and nasal turbinate swabs as an alternative to nasopharyngeal swabs. Current guidance on specimen collection is available through the CDC's [Interim Guidelines for Collection, Handling, and Testing COVID-19 Specimens from Patients for Coronavirus \(SARS-CoV-2\) Testing](#).

How do assays used in COVID-19 testing work?

Molecular assays and serologic assays are two broad categories for specific testing mechanisms.

- Molecular assays:** Molecular tests detect the presence of a virus by locking onto sequences of genetic material of interest—in this case, portions of SARS-CoV-2 RNA, then amplifying that portion until there's enough for detection. Because SARS-CoV-2 is an RNA virus, molecular assays that require DNA for the amplification and detection to occur (e.g., polymerase chain reaction) are predicated on the reverse transcription of RNA into complementary DNA. Simply speaking, a PCR test could render a positive result if it finds viral fragments, even if whole viable virus is not present.

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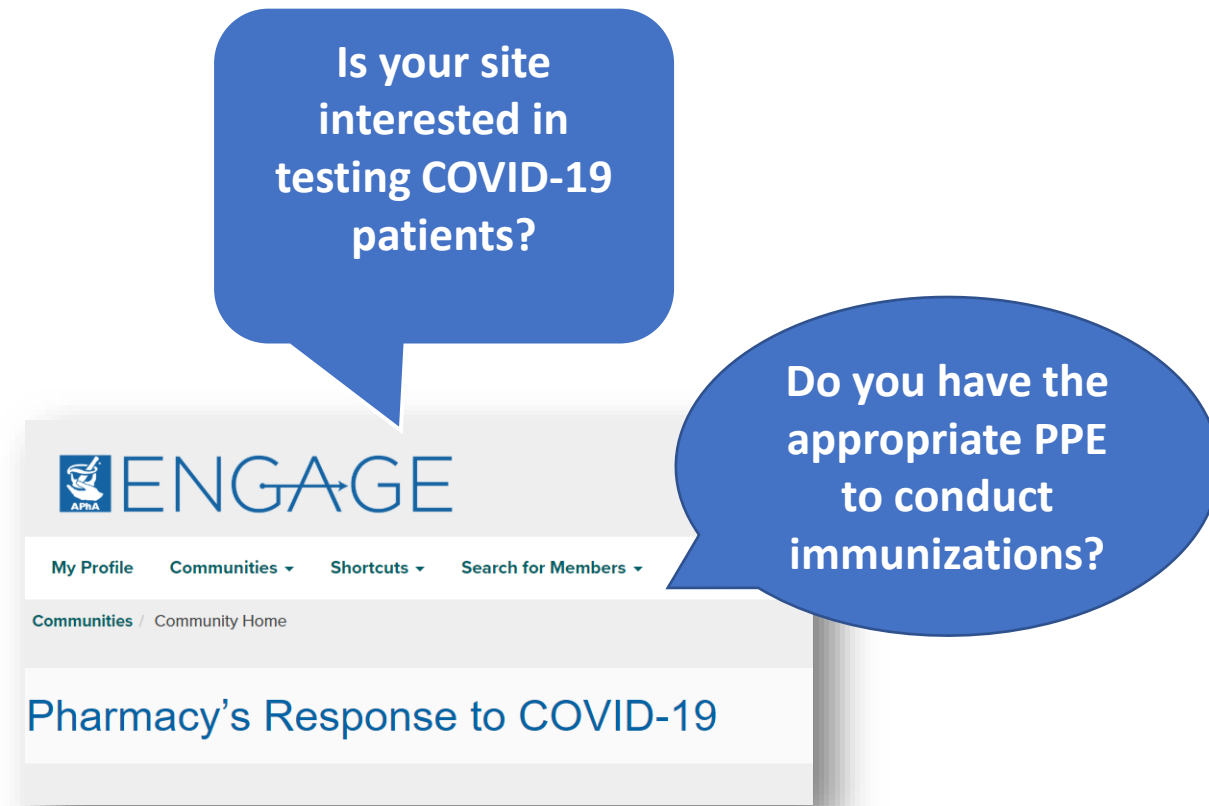
Pharmacy's Response to COVID-19

POST your questions

SHARE your lessons learned

SUPPORT your colleagues

ACCESS the latest information



Join Us

Same day, Same time, Same Place

- Weekly webinar #6 will be on **Thursday, April 30, from 1-2 pm ET**
- The webinar recording and slides will be available within 24 hours



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COVID-19 Resources and Training for You

Webinars

Addressing the COVID-19 Crisis: An Open Forum Webinar Series for Pharmacists are weekly webinars conducted every Thursday from 1:00 pm–2:00 pm ET. Each open forum webinar is moderated by APhA President Michael Hogue.

- April 16: [Register for this webinar.](#)
- April 9: [Access the recording](#) and [view the slides](#). In this webinar, NABP Executive Director Carmen Catizone discussed the changes that are happening related to pharmacists' scope of practice and other pharmacy practice areas like prescription dispensing in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- April 2: [Access the recording](#) and [view the slides](#). This webinar focused on COVID-19 Tests: Fraudulent Activity Related to Tests and Medical Products.
- March 26: [Access the recording](#) and [view the slides](#). This webinar focused on the Safety of Pharmacists and Pharmacy Staff During the COVID19 Pandemic.

<https://www.pharmacist.com/coronavirus/resources-training>