

COVID-19: Comparative Study of Homeopathic Medicines (*Cinchona* or *China Officinalis* and *Zincum Metallicum*) and Allopathic Medicine (Chloroquine and Zinc)

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ABSTRACT

Coronavirus disease, commonly known as COVID-19, has become a pandemic. Within a short time, the disease has spread to more than 213 countries and affected more than 2471136 peoples till April 22, 2020. Several empirical evidences suggest that Chloroquine and Zinc are very effective to prevent and cure the novel virus (COVID-19). In this study, I argued that the Homeopathic medical system is very effective to cure viruses. Particularly, I argued that "*Cinchona*, also known as *China Officinalis*" and *Zincum Metallicum* (homeopathic drugs) have the same properties and are very cheap as compared to allopathic drugs. Additionally, Chloroquine has several side effects, while homeopathic drugs have no side effects. Hence, it is recommended to use both homeopathic drugs in place of allopathic drugs for the better treatment of patients suffering from the deadly disease.

Key words: COVID-19, Homeopathic, Allopathic, Drugs, Chloroquine, Zinc

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INTRODUCTION

Coronavirus disease, commonly known as COVID-19 has spread to more than 213 countries all over the world and as of April 22, 2020, over 2471136 people have been affected so far, while over 169006 deaths are attributed to the disease [1]. The disease is spreading very fast and affecting more and more people day by day. COVID-19 is an acute respiratory disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2). The common symptoms of the disease reported by World Health Organization (WHO) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) include runny nose, cough, shortness of breath, fever, and in more severe cases it may include severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure and even death [2,3].

According to the WHO, CDC, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration [4], currently, no drug is approved to treat COVID-19 [5,6]. However, some treatments are under investigation [7]. Mr. Donald Trump, President of the United States of America, through a press conference on 19th March 2020, claimed that FDA has approved 'Chloroquine' to treat COVID-19 [8]. However, FDA issued a press announcement which shows that they have not approved any drug or therapeutics to treat patients infected with COVID-19, they are closely working to

investigate the efficacy of "Chloroquine" to treat COVID-19 [4].

I argue that 'Chloroquine' is effective in treating patients infected with COVID-19, furthermore, Zinc plays an interactive role to enhance the immune system of infected patients, and thus, both drugs are very helpful to treat patients effectively. However, since the press conference of Mr. Trump, the price of Chloroquine has not only increased too much, but it is also not easily available in local pharmaceutical stores, especially in developing countries like Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Nepal, etc.

I further argue that there are many similarities between "Chloroquine" and "*Cinchona* also known as *China Officinalis*" (A homeopathic drug). This article is aimed to compare both drugs. Because currently no drug is approved for successfully treating COVID-19. Hence, it is very important to identify the efficacy of under trial drugs on an urgent basis because the disease is rapidly spreading all over the world and it has been declared by WHO as a Pandemic.

Evidence regarding the effectiveness of "Chloroquine" in treating coronavirus affected patients

Some evidence shows that Chloroquine is effective in treating coronaviruses infections [9]. For instance, Keyaerts, et al. [10] demonstrate that "Chloroquine inhibits HCoV-OC43 (human coronaviruses strain OC43) replication in HRT-18 cells, with a 50% effective concentration (\pm standard deviation) of $0.306 \pm 0.0091 \mu\text{M}$ and a 50% cytotoxic concentration (\pm standard deviation)

of $419 \pm 192.5 \mu\text{M}$, resulting in a selectivity index of 1,369". In addition, a recent study conducted by Wang, et al. [11] indicates that Chloroquine effectively prevents entry step and post-entry into Vero E6 cells for COVID-19 infection. The authors further demonstrated that besides Chloroquine's antiviral activity, it has an immune-modulating activity, which may synergistically enhance its antiviral effect in vivo.

Furthermore, Chloroquine is not only one of the best medicines being used for many years but it is also hypothetically appropriate to cure the COVID-19 [11,12].

Comparison between "Chloroquine" and "Cinchona"

"Chloroquine" is an allopathic antimalarial drug used to treat patients infected with malaria. It is an FDA approved drug for treating malaria, lupus, and rheumatoid arthritis [4]. It was primarily recognized in the 1930s [12]. While, "*Cinchona*" is a Homeopathic drug that was introduced by the father of Homeopathy German physician Samuel Christian Hahnemann in 1790 (much before the advent of Chloroquine) [13, p.12], it is also used to treat malarial patients. "*Cinchona*" is the oldest name of "Chloroquine". Both drugs have the same symptoms and curing properties.

In the allopathic medical systems, the Chloroquine is used as a salt namely Chloroquine sulphate (salt of *Cinchona* Bark), while in the homeopathic medical system, the mother tincture of cinchona bark and its potencies are used. Moreover, homeopathic mother tinctures and potencies are much cheaper than Chloroquine Sulphate.

Why "*Cinchona*" should be used in place of Chloroquine?

There are several reasons why "*Cinchona*" should be used in place of Chloroquine? Some of them are discussed below.

China off (in homeopathic potency) enhances the immunity against the symptoms caused by COVID-19.

There are many side effects of using Chloroquine. For instance, Braga, et al. [14] reported that although antimalarial drugs (Chloroquine and Primaquine) are helpful to treat patients infected with vivax malaria, at the same time these drugs cause several adverse effects mainly related to gastrointestinal leading to non-adherence of drug treatment. The authors further reported that these drugs also reduce the lack of appetite along with blurred vision, pruritus, insomnia, etc. Whereas, there is not any side effect reported by any scholar/patient or doctor/physician who used china off in a homeopathic way. The symptoms of COVID-19 are the same as compared to *Cinchona* Off symptoms.

Role of Zinc to enhance the immune system

It has been very well reported that the persons with the low immune system are more vulnerable to get infected with COVID-19. Hence, it is necessary to pay more attention to enhancing the immune system of patients

infected with COVID-19. It has been reported that Zinc deficiency depresses both innate and adaptive immune responses, and it also plays an important role to enhance the immune system [15]. Furthermore, Khanam, et al. [16] also reported that Zinc plays an important role in boosting the immune system by keeping the immune system strong.

Interaction of Chloroquine with Zinc

It has been reported that Zn^{2+} prevents coronaviruses and arterivirus RNA polymerase activity in vitro and zinc ionophores obstruct the replication of coronaviruses [17]. Furthermore, Chloroquine along with Zinc has also been reported to treat COVID-19 infected patients. For instance, Xue, et al. [18] examined the effect of zinc ions along-with Chloroquine in cancer cell lines (a human ovarian) (A2780). The authors found that Chloroquine boosted zinc uptake by A2780 cells, as tested through a fluorescent zinc probe. The authors further reported that the blend of Chloroquine and zinc increases the cytotoxicity of Chloroquine and tempted apoptosis in A2780 cells. Hence, both drugs are very helpful to enhance immunity and treat coronaviruses successfully.

Zincum Metallicum is a Homeopathic Medicine that is also used to increase the immune system. Zinc is a mineral and used in 3x and 6x potency in homeopathy. As the COVID-19 attack those persons whose immune system is weak, hence, Zincum Metallicum can also be used to treat such patients.

Treatment of virus through Homeopathic medicine

Many studies report Homeopathic medicines are very important and can successfully treat patients infected with deadly viruses. For instance, Memon, et al. [19] reported that three hepatitis C patients, who failed to get cured through conventional therapy, were successfully treated through the homeopathic medical system. The authors further reported that after the treatment of patients for a period of two years, not only the patients recovered from bodyweight loss and weakness, but the laboratory diagnostic investigation of HCV also become non-reactive. Further, WHO has also admitted that some western, traditional, or home remedies may help to ease symptoms of the disease and there are many clinical trials underway including both western and traditional medicines [5].

CONCLUSION

Since its emergence at the end of December 2019, the COVID-19 has affected a huge number of people in more than 213 countries. The number is increasing day by day. This study showed that Chloroquine is effective in treating patients affected by COVID-19. Additionally, the role of Zinc is also very important to enhance the immune system of infected patients. However, since the press conference of Mr. Trump, not only the price of Chloroquine has risen but it is also not easily available in the market. I argue that Homeopathic medicines namely *Cinchona* and Zincum Metallicum are also very similar to

Chloroquine and Zinc and are effective in treating COVID-19 patients. Even, China Off is much cheaper and safer than Chloroquine as discussed.

Homeopathy is based on the principle of “like can cure like” which is symptomatic treatment. In other words, an ill patient can be treated through a substance that also produces similar symptoms [13, p.10]. It means that homeopathy improves the vital force/immune system against the symptoms produced using Cinchona in a homeopathic way and cure the disease related to such symptoms. Thus, both Homeopathic Drugs are recommended to be used to treat COVID-19 infected patients. Although the medicines are helpful to cure a disease, an individual’s power of healing is also important. For instance, the Greek Physician Hippocrates in the 5th Century BC also anticipated that patients should be encouraged to believe in their power of healing to cure a disease [13, p.10].

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