



## **TITLE: Off-Label Use of Chloroquine and Hydroxychloroquine for COVID-19 Treatment in Africa Against WHO Recommendation**

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### **ABSTRACT**

COVID-19 is continuing as a big challenge for the globe and several types of research are continued to find safe and effective treatment and preventive options. Although there is a lack of conclusive evidence of their benefit, there is worldwide controversy to use anti-malarial drugs, hydroxychloroquine and chloroquine, for the treatment of COVID-19. FDA issued an emergency use authorization to the use of these drugs for the treatment of COVID-19. On the contrary to the FDA, the European Medicines Agency has warned against the widespread use of these drugs to treat COVID-19. Finally, the WHO declared that clinical trials on these drugs are halted after the devastating findings of the study published in the medical journal called The Lancet. Against this fact, there are several rumors about the irresponsible use of these drugs in Africa for the treatment of COVID-19. This work aimed to review the off-label use of these drugs for the treatment of COVID-19 in African countries against WHO recommendation. Data on the use of these drugs for the treatment of COVID-19 in African countries were searched from credible sources including Scopus, PubMed, Hindawi, Google Scholar, and from local and international media. The study showed that many African countries have already approved at the national level to use these drugs to treat COVID-19 by opposing WHO warnings. In addition to this, falsified and substandard chloroquine products

started to emerge in some African countries. The health sectors of the African government should critically compare the risks and benefits before using these drugs. The WHO and African drug regulatory organizations should intervene to stop the off-label use practice of these drugs against the licensed purpose and distribution of falsified and substandard products in the continent.

### **BIOGRAPHY**

Anteneh Belayneh has completed his MSc. Of pharmaceuticals at the age of 31 years from Mekelle University, Ethiopia. He is young lecturer and researcher of pharmacy and other health areas in Department of pharmacy, Debre Markos University, Ethiopia. He has over 12 publications that have been cited over 140 times, and his publication h-index is 3. He has been serving as a reviewer of several reputed journals.

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