

Advisory on the use of hydroxy–chloroquine as prophylaxis for SARS-CoV-2 infection

The **National Task force for COVID-19** constituted by Indian Council of Medical Research recommends the use of hydroxy– chloroquine for prophylaxis of SARS-CoV-2 infection for high risk population. Copy is annexed.

The Advisory provides for placing the following high risk population under chemoprophylaxis with hydroxy chloroquine:

- Asymptomatic Healthcare Workers involved in the care of suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19
- Asymptomatic household contacts of laboratory confirmed cases

The protocol recommended by the National Task force has been approved by the Drug Controller General of India for restricted use in emergency situations.

While following the above recommendations, States should take note of the following:

- 1) **The placing of healthcare workers under chemoprophylaxis should not instill a sense of false security.** They should follow all prescribed public health measures such as frequent washing of hands, respiratory etiquettes, keeping a distance of minimum 1m and use of Personal protective equipment (wherever applicable).
- 2) They should self-monitor their health and report to health authorities immediately in the event of them becoming symptomatic.
- 3) The high risk contacts of a positive case placed under chemo prophylaxis, **should remain in home quarantine while on prophylactic therapy.**
- 4) As recommended by the said Task Force, the drug should only be given on the prescription of a registered medical practitioner. The contraindications mentioned in the recommendations should strictly be followed.
- 5) Apart from the symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, breathing difficulty), if the person on chemo-prophylaxis develops any other symptoms, he should immediately seek medical treatment of the medical practitioner who has prescribed the chemoprophylaxis.

It is reiterated that the intake of the above medicine should not in still sense of false security.