



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on April 24, 2020

VA “Study” on Hydroxychloroquine Challenged, Gilead’s Drug Remdesivir Ineffective

A recent “study” by the Veteran’s Health Administration concluded that hydroxychloroquine and azithromycin are not only worse than ineffective against COVID-19, but actually lead to a higher fatality rate. The supposedly nonpartisan study contradicted several others that have demonstrated the drug’s effectiveness and safety, and was challenged on several grounds.



First, the patients were not given zinc, which disrupts coronavirus in infected cells. Those treated were primarily elderly males with other chronic and fatal diseases, while the control group were composed of patients generally without such problems. Those in the “study” had a plethora of medical issues, in addition to COVID-19, including heart disease, asthma, liver disease, diabetes, cancer, and even AIDS.

Alarmingly, the study’s author, Scott Sutton, has been paid to do three studies for Gilead Sciences, Inc., maker of Remdesivir, also a drug in trials to treat COVID-19! The stock price of Gilead [has risen markedly since February](#), when it was announced that the drug has been identified as a potentially a medication to treat the virus.

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Robert Wilkie disputed the importance of the VA “study.” He noted that it was only “an observational study,” rather than a “clinical study.”

Wilkie added, “It was done on a small number of veterans, sadly those of whom were in the last stages of life. We know the drug has been working on middle-aged and younger veterans, and the governor of New York was just in the Oval Office yesterday asking for more of the drug to be delivered to the city of New York.”

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Laura Ingraham of Fox News weighed in on her program last night, as well: “As I reported last week, the media similarly showed little skepticism when they hyped early clinical trials of Gilead’s unproven and expensive drug Remdevisir.”

Unfortunately for Gilead Sciences, Remdesivir does not appear to be very effective at curing the coronavirus. As [Reuters reported yesterday](#),

Gilead Sciences Inc’s experimental coronavirus drug failed its first randomised clinical trial, the Financial Times reported on Thursday, citing draft documents published accidentally by the World Health Organization.

Trading in the shares of the company was halted after they fell 6%.

Sadly, the efficacy of the drug hydroxychloroquine (marketed under the brand name Plaquenil) in mitigating the effects of COVID-19 has become a political football, with opponents largely ignoring the positive outcomes in its use against the coronavirus in an effort to attack President Trump. What some are willing to say or do to gain a political advantage seems to have no bounds — in the case of



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hydroxychloroquine, it appears that some on the Left are willing to oppose a potentially life-saving drug simply because Trump has recommended it.

On March 19, I reported in an online article for *The New American* that the drug “has been killing coronavirus (COVID-19) in laboratory experiments, according to findings published March 9 in the *Clinical Infectious Diseases* journal.”

Naively, I thought everyone, regardless of political affiliation, would be overjoyed at the prospect of an existing medication that could knock out COVID-19 in ill patients.

In fact, the night before my article appeared, Gregory Rigano, an advisor to the Stanford University School of Medicine, who has been leading a program to test the effects of the drug for treatment of COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus, appeared on the *Tucker Carlson Tonight* show, touting its benefits. He told Carlson that hydroxychloroquine, combined with azithromycin, is a 100-percent cure for the virus.

In a sentence that I failed to grasp the full importance of at the time, I wrote, “He [Rigano] pleaded with President Donald Trump to authorize the use of hydroxychloroquine against coronavirus immediately.”

The very next day after Rigano’s appearance, I noted, “President Trump is known to be a regular viewer of Carlson’s show, and shortly after my article appeared, Trump mentioned the drug during his daily coronavirus press briefing.” (I doubt that Trump read my article, but I expect that he had seen Carlson’s program the previous night).

Rather than expressing optimism about the drug’s possibilities in controlling the pandemic in the United States, however, the media immediately opposed it, with one reporter flatly accusing Trump of giving the American public “false hope.”

Representative Adam Schiff (D-Calif.), who is well known as a rabid political opponent of Trump from the highly partisan impeachment hearings of late last year, has also declared himself a vociferous opponent of the drug. Not surprisingly, to someone such as Schiff, if Trump is for something, it is a reflex action to be against it. “Early results are in for the drug Trump has been hyping as a cure, and unfortunately, it’s not that good,” Schiff tweeted earlier this week. “We need to be guided by science, not hucksters or hype. Irresponsibly promoting unproven treatments is not a strategy for dealing with a pandemic. Only the absence of strategy.”

The reaction of Schiff and other leftists in and out of the Democratic Party caucus and their media allies is a perfect example of the experiments of Ivan Pavlov. Pavlov was a Russian scientist who noted that dogs salivate at the sight of meat. After ringing a bell at the same time he gave them meat, he started just ringing the bell. He observed that the dogs salivated at just the ringing of the bell, because they now associated the ringing of the bell with actual meat.

In much the same way, those on the Left immediately oppose anything Trump is for, and support anything he is against. While some may chalk this up as just politics, when the lives of individuals are at stake — as well as our liberties and our economy — we need a better reason to oppose a drug than that Trump has offered it up as a *possible* drug to use to combat COVID-19.

During World War II, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill explained his kind words for Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin after Nazi Germany attacked the Soviet Union. “If Hitler invaded hell I would make at least a favourable reference to the devil in the House of Commons.” To paraphrase Churchill, for those on the Left, if the devil opposes Donald Trump, then they will praise Satan on the floor of



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Congress.



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