

# WHAT IS HYDROXYCHLOROQUINE

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Hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) is an anti-malarial drug similar to chloroquine, one of the oldest and best-known anti-malarial drugs, but with lesser side-effects. It can be bought over the counter and is fairly inexpensive.

The drug shot to fame as it is shown to have [shortened the time to clinical recovery](#) of [COVID-19](#) patients. However, many of these are in small lab-controlled testing and no proper human trials have been conducted to determine its efficacy.

Also read | [India has enough stock of hydroxychloroquine, says Centre](#)

The [Indian Council for Medical Research \(ICMR\) has cleared HCQ](#) to be used as a prophylaxis, or preventive medication, by doctors, nurses and other health staff. Union Health Ministry, last month, [moved it to Schedule H1](#), which can be sold on prescription only.

U.S. President Donald [Trump has been a proponent of its use](#), calling it a “gamechanger”. He warned ["retaliation" against India](#), if it didn't revoke the ban on its exports. India eventually allowed export of the drug.

Also read | [More than 29 million hydroxychloroquine doses bought by U.S. have come from India, says President Trump](#)

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As many as 284 districts have at least one COVID-19 case

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