



Requirements for Dispensing or Selling Chloroquine and Hydroxychloroquine in Ohio

Updated 7/29/2020

Effective July 30, 2020, Board of Pharmacy rule [4729:5-5-21](#) of the Administrative Code goes into effect. In general, the rule prohibits the use of hydroxychloroquine and chloroquine for the treatment or prevention of COVID-19 [see paragraph (B) below].

4729:5-5-21 Prescription requirements for chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine.

(A) No prescription for chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine may be dispensed by a pharmacist or sold at retail by a licensed terminal distributor of dangerous drugs, including prescriptions for patients residing in Ohio dispensed or sold at retail by nonresident terminal distributors of dangerous drugs as defined in rule 4729:5-8-01 of the Administrative Code, unless the prescription bears a written diagnosis code from the prescriber or a statement indicating its veterinary medical purpose.

(B) Except as provided in paragraph (C) of this rule, prescriptions issued for chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine for prophylactic use related to COVID-19 or for the treatment of COVID-19 are strictly prohibited unless otherwise approved by the board's executive director in consultation with the board president, at which time a resolution shall issue. Upon the effective date of this rule, all previous approvals for the use of chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine shall be deemed void and must be approved using the process outlined in this paragraph.

(C) The prohibition in paragraph (B) of this rule does not apply to prescriptions issued as part of a documented institutional review board-approved clinical trial to evaluate the safety and efficacy of the drugs to treat COVID-19. Prescriptions must include documentation that the patient is enrolled in a clinical trial.

(D) Paragraphs (B) and (C) of this rule shall also apply to medication orders and outpatient prescriptions dispensed by institutional pharmacies as defined in agency 4729 of the Administrative Code.

REMINDER: Based on ongoing analysis and emerging scientific data, FDA [has revoked](#) the emergency use authorization (EUA) to use hydroxychloroquine and chloroquine to treat COVID-19 in certain hospitalized patients when a clinical trial is unavailable or participation is not feasible. The agency made this determination based on recent results from a large, randomized clinical trial in hospitalized patients that found these medicines showed no benefit for decreasing the likelihood of death or speeding recovery.



Frequently Asked Questions

To assist licensees in complying with this rule, the Board has developed the following frequently asked questions. This document will be updated as needed. If you need additional information, the most expedient way to have your questions answered is to e-mail the Board by visiting: www.pharmacy.ohio.gov/contact.

Q1) Do the requirements of the rule apply to inpatient prescriptions issued for patients in an institutional facility (i.e. hospital, nursing home, etc.)?

Yes. The rule applies to all inpatient and outpatient prescriptions or medication orders [see paragraph (D) of the [rule](#)].

Q2) Do the exceptions from the old rule still apply?

Except for use as part of a clinical trial [see paragraph (C) of the [rule](#)], all previous exceptions or authorizations for the use of chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine to treat or prevent COVID-19 are no longer permitted.

Q3) Can prescribers personally furnish these drugs for the treatment of COVID-19?

Locations licensed by the Board of Pharmacy as terminal distributors of dangerous drugs, including prescriber clinics, are not permitted to personally furnish chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine for the treatment or prevention of COVID-19.

Q4) Are non-resident (i.e. out-of-state) pharmacies required to comply with the requirements of this rule?

Yes. Unlike the previous version of the rule, this rule applies non-resident pharmacies.

Q5) I have a patient who has been taking chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine to treat a chronic condition and the patient's prescriber has not included a diagnosis code on the prescription. What are my options?

This rule still requires prescriptions for these drugs to have a diagnosis code, including those issued verbally. For prescriptions issued that do not have a diagnosis code, a pharmacist, pharmacy intern, or certified pharmacy technician must contact the issuing prescriber to obtain the proper diagnosis code and document this information on the prescription or in the patient's profile.

Q6) Am I still able to prescribe chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine for other conditions?

Yes, if the prescriber includes a diagnosis code on the prescription. The limitations set forth in rule are only for the off-label prescribing of these medications for the treatment or prevention of COVID-19. Other off label uses (e.g. dermatomyositis, cutaneous disease, etc.) are still permitted.