

What is being done to find an effective treatment?

Treatment options for COVID-19 are currently being investigated around the world. There's some evidence that certain medications may have the potential to be effective for preventing illness or treating the symptoms of COVID-19.

Here are some treatment options that are currently being investigated for protection against SARS-CoV-2 and treatment of COVID-19 symptoms.

Remdesivir

Remdesivir is an experimental broad-spectrum antiviral drug originally designed to target Ebola.

Researchers have found that remdesivir is highly effective at fighting the novel coronavirus in isolated cells.

This treatment is not yet approved in humans, but two clinical trials for this drug have been implemented in China. One clinical trial was recently also approved by the FDA in the United States.

Chloroquine / hydroxychloroquine

Chloroquine is a drug that's used to fight malaria and autoimmune diseases. It's been in use for more than 70 years and is considered safe.

Researchers have discovered that this drug is effective at fighting the SARS-CoV-2 virus in studies done in test tubes.

At least 10 clinical trials are currently looking at the potential use of chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine as an option for combating the novel coronavirus.

Lopinavir and ritonavir

Lopinavir and ritonavir are sold under the name Kaletra and are designed to treat HIV. In South Korea, a 54-year-old man was given a combination of these two drugs and had a significant reduction in his levels of the coronavirus.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), there could be benefits to using Kaletra in combination with other drugs.

APN01

A clinical trial is set to start soon in China to examine the potential of a drug called APN01 to fight the novel coronavirus.

The scientists who first developed APN01 in the early 2000s discovered that a certain protein called ACE2 is involved in SARS infections. This protein also helped protect the lungs from injury due to respiratory distress.

From recent research, it turns out that the 2019 coronavirus, like SARS, also uses the ACE2 protein to infect cells in humans.

The randomized, dual-arm trial will look at the effect of the medication on 24 patients for 1 week. Half of the participants in the trial will receive the APN01 drug, and the other half will be given a placebo. If results are encouraging, larger clinical trials will be done.

Favilavir

China has approved the use of the antiviral drug favilavir to treat symptoms of COVID-19. The drug was initially developed to treat inflammation in the nose and throat. Although the results of the study haven't been released yet, the drug has supposedly shown to be effective in treating COVID-19 symptoms in a clinical trial of 70 people.

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