Treatment of COVID-19 with antiretroviral combinations

Social media reports are circulating regarding the use of combinations of antiretroviral drugs such as lopinavir/ritonavir for the treatment of COVID-19 illness.

The limited evidence available regarding the safety and effectiveness of these medications in the treatment of COVID-19 illness has not shown them to be beneficial in severely ill patients. Clinical use of these agents is considered strictly experimental and as such should be undertaken only by infectious disease specialists in severely ill patients.

Pharmacists must use their professional judgment to question the appropriateness of any prescriptions they receive for these medications that are outside the usual indications. This is important to protect patients from unnecessary adverse effects and to protect the supply of these medications for those patients who rely on them for treatment of medical conditions for which they have been approved.

The COVID-19 situation is evolving, and data collection is ongoing. The evidence regarding the use of antiretroviral drugs in the treatment of COVID-19 will be reviewed as it becomes available and this statement will be updated accordingly.

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References