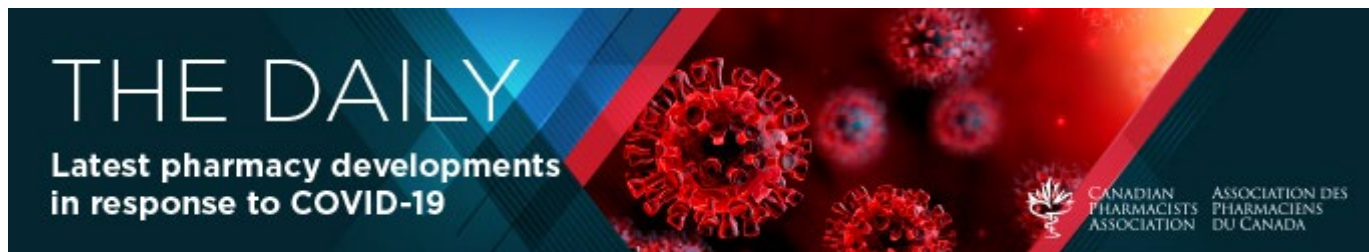


From: Public & Professional Affairs Department
Sent: April 24, 2020 5:15 PM
Subject: The Daily: CPhA's COVID-19 Update for April 24



April 24

CPhA

PPE Suggested Best Practices document updated

CPhA has updated its document outlining suggested best practices for pharmacy use of personal protective equipment (PPE). Changes reflect new guidance from health organizations in Canada and around the world on the use of non-medical masks to reduce virus spread, sessional use of PPE in certain circumstances and tools to help practitioners better assess individual scenarios where PPE may be required. The updated document is available in [English](#) and [French](#).

COVID-19 chapter updated

CPhA's COVID-19 chapter has been updated to include new evidence related to COVID-19 symptoms. CPhA will continue to update this content as new evidence becomes available. The open-access content is available on our website in [English](#) and [French](#), and is also available on RxTx.

CPhA Explainer: Drug Myths and COVID-19

When it comes to COVID-19, there are a lot of myths and misconceptions around drugs and possible treatments. CPhA's latest explainer video, Drug Myths and COVID-19, busts the top 5 and urges the public to speak to their pharmacist or other health care provider for trusted, credible and evidence-based information. The short video is available in [English](#) and [French](#).

CPhA's COVID-19 web pages are being updated regularly at www.pharmacists.ca/covid19 and www.pharmacists.ca/covid19fr.

Provincial

PPE tips from the field

As pharmacists begin wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) in daily practice, they may discover wearing it is less comfortable than expected. The Alberta Pharmacists' Association (RxA) shares some [tips from the field](#) to help pharmacists stay safe and comfortable in practice.

National

CWC hosting session on safety aspects of hydroxychloroquine

Choosing Wisely Canada (CWC) is hosting a [virtual gathering](#) on April 29 at 12pm ET to discuss safety considerations with chloroquine, hydroxychloroquine and azithromycin in the management of COVID-19. The session features Dr. David Juurlink, internist and head of the Division of Clinical Pharmacology and Toxicology at Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, who will be discussing his [recent article](#) published in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*.

Prime Minister announces new support for COVID-19 medical research and vaccine development

On April 23, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau [announced](#) more than \$1 billion in support of a national medical research strategy to fight COVID-19 that includes vaccine development, the production of treatments and tracking of the virus. This new funding builds on the \$275 million investment for coronavirus research and medical countermeasures announced in March. The federal government will invest in new medical countermeasures to better understand COVID-19, and develop the infrastructure needed to fight the virus in Canada. “We are making sure that Canada remains at the forefront of scientific research to help us make smart and effective decisions on the path to recovery,” says Trudeau.

International

RPS calls for action from government on key policy asks

Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS) president Sandra Gidley wrote [a letter](#) to the parliamentary under-secretary of state for health, Jo Churchill, MP, highlighting how government action on key policy asks would make a real difference to pharmacists supporting patients in the coming months. Key asks in the letter include protecting pharmacy teams, health and well-being support, medicines supply, prescription charges, and fair funding for community pharmacies.

COVID-19 hurts domestic production of anti-tuberculosis drugs in India

The Indian Health Ministry may suspend exports of anti-tuberculosis medicines because the coronavirus outbreak has hurt domestic production of the drugs and overseas shipments will worsen the supply problem in the country, the [Economic Times reports](#). Specifically, a shortage of manpower, difficulties with transportation facilities and a disruption in supply of raw materials to pharmaceutical manufacturers has affected production capacity.

AbbVie donates \$35 million to support COVID-19 relief efforts

AbbVie [announced](#) a donation of US\$35 million to support COVID-19 relief efforts. In the US, AbbVie's funds will be used to support health care capacity for hospitals as well as protect vulnerable populations by enabling access to food and essential supplies. In Europe, the donation will provide critical equipment and supplies to patients and front-line health care workers in the hardest-hit countries.

Pfizer, Teva running short on antibiotic azithromycin amid COVID-19 therapy hunt

In the hunt for a COVID-19 therapy, some researchers have hit upon a combination of antimalarial hydroxychloroquine and antibiotic azithromycin as a potential answer, [FiercePharma reports](#). So far, clinical results have been mixed at best, but demand for azithromycin has increased dramatically and manufacturers are feeling the pinch. Major manufacturers like Teva and Pfizer are scrambling to supply doses of generic azithromycin, according to the FDA's running shortages list.

EMA warns against use of hydroxychloroquine outside of clinical trials

The European Union's drug regulator has again [warned against](#) using 2 older malaria drugs to treat COVID-19 outside trials or national emergency use programs, citing potentially lethal side effects. The European Medicines Agency (EMA) urges medical professionals to closely monitor COVID-19 patients receiving chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine and "carefully consider the possibility of side effects, particularly with higher doses." Extra caution is warranted if either are used with other drugs. The 2 drugs potentially cause irregular heartbeat, a condition that could be worsened when used in combination with other medicines such as the antibiotic azithromycin.

Newsworthy

Drug demand is another curve to be flattened

Though Canadians are taking steps to flatten the curve of COVID-19 infections, a second curve that needs to be flattened during the pandemic is the steep increase in demand for prescription drugs. Barry Power, CPhA's senior director of digital content, and Daniel Chiasson, CEO of the Canadian Association for Pharmacy Distribution Management (CAPDM), spoke to [healthing.ca](#) about [drug shortages](#) and how the 30-day limit is designed to preserve Canada's drug stock. “We've taken steps to flatten the demand curve so everybody gets access to prescription drugs,” says Chiasson. “Pharmacies can deliver your prescriptions. Get what drugs you need. Leave some behind [for others]. We're all in this together,” adds Power.

Worth Repeating

"We are gravely disappointed in this decision. Ignoring the significant supply chain warnings, information and alerts from the manufacturers and distributors will not make the problem go away. We believed — and still believe — that doing our part to stabilize already shaky international supply chains is the right thing to do. Preventing new shortages and helping to ensure current shortages don't get worse was what we were aiming to do. Unfortunately, the government has decided to simply leave this up to fate." — New Brunswick College of Pharmacists registrar Sam Lanctin on the province eliminating the 30-day supply directive

This daily COVID-19 update is compiled by the Canadian Pharmacists Association. To unsubscribe, please reply to this email with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line.

Please note that this publication is meant to inform and is not a comprehensive list of information available. Be sure to check with your provincial regulatory authority or advocacy association for province-specific information. While we aim to ensure all information contained in this update is accurate, the situation is evolving rapidly and CPhA does not take responsibility for the content provided by other organizations and sources.