

Open Letter to the Brazilian Population

The mission of the Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP Brasil), founded in 2006, is to promote safe practices in the use of medicines and health products, and thus contribute to patient safety. Our work focuses on producing, analyzing, and sharing scientific knowledge relevant to our mission with institutions, health professionals, and society. We also seek to reach those who use these technologies but do not have scientific training in the area. Our guiding values are the commitment to the correct use of health technologies, especially medicine, within ethical principles, with transparency, quality, and responsibility. Our most relevant activities over these fourteen years have been the promotion of six international events, seventy courses and training in Brazil and abroad, the publication of forty newsletters on the safe use of medicines, participation in various commissions and committees in public and private institutions, and joint projects with the International Medication Safety Network, the Brazilian Regulatory Agency (Anvisa) and the Brazilian Ministry of Health. We also created and maintained the Latin American Network for the Safe Use of Medicines with several Latin American countries.

Given the active discussion in Brazilian society on the use of chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine in the treatment of COVID-19, we are going public to reiterate the central role of science as a guide for decisions on the safe use of medicines and the relentless pursuit of minimizing harm to patients.

We reaffirm, as we have already pointed out in our Newsletter published in April 2020, that to date, there is **no scientific evidence about the effectiveness of the use of chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine in patients at any stage of COVID-19**. Scientific papers published so far and the evidence generated do not support the use of these drugs.

We warn of the risks of medication errors and adverse events resulting from the prescribed use or self-medication with drugs that are being evaluated worldwide in studies for the treatment of COVID-19 and, therefore, until then, without evidence of efficacy for such therapeutic indication.

We emphasize our regret for all the deaths caused by COVID-19 in Brazil and the world, and we deplore the losses and suffering of families. We all have a desire for effective treatments and vaccines to be made available soon. However, knowledge about Sar-CoV-2 still has many unclarified gaps. Today, the most important thing is to maintain social distancing to prevent the collapse of our health system.

Finally, we express our support for the manifestations of the National Health Council, the Brazilian Society of Immunology, the Brazilian Society of Pulmonology and Tisiology, the Brazilian Society of Intensive Medicine, and the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences of the University of São Paulo (USP), united in the quest to overcome this pandemic.

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