

## Banner Health experts warn against self-medicating to prevent or treat COVID-19

PHOENIX (March 23, 2020) – Medical toxicologists and emergency physicians are warning the public against the use of inappropriate medications and household products to prevent or treat COVID-19. In particular, Banner Health experts emphasize that chloroquine, a malaria medication, should not be ingested to treat or prevent this virus.

“Given the uncertainty around COVID-19, we understand that people are trying to find new ways to prevent or treat this virus, but self-medicating is not the way to do so,” said Dr. Daniel Brooks, Banner Poison and Drug Information Center medical director. “The last thing that we want right now is to inundate our emergency departments with patients who believe they found a vague and risky solution that could potentially jeopardize their health.”

A man has died and his wife is under critical care after the couple, both in their 60s, ingested chloroquine phosphate, an additive commonly used at aquariums to clean fish tanks. Within thirty minutes of ingestion, the couple experienced immediate effects requiring admittance to a nearby Banner Health hospital.

Most patients who become infected with COVID-19 will only require symptomatic care and self-isolation to prevent the risk of infecting others. Check first with a primary care physician. The routine use of specific treatments, including medications described as ‘anti-COVID-19’, is not recommended for non-hospitalized patients, including the anti-malarial drug chloroquine.

“We are strongly urging the medical community to not prescribe this medication to any non-hospitalized patients,” said Dr. Brooks.

For disinfecting surfaces, the Centers for Diseases and Control Prevention recommends the use of diluted household bleach solutions, alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol and common EPA-registered household disinfectants.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND RESOURCES:

- Visit Banner’s [COVID-19 webpage](#) for more information about COVID-19.
- Banner has an [online symptom checker](#) for those concerned about their symptoms.

Headquartered in Arizona, Banner Health is one of the largest nonprofit health care systems in the country. The system owns and operates 28 acute-care hospitals, Banner Health Network, Banner – University Medicine, academic and employed physician groups, long-term care centers, outpatient surgery centers and an array of other services; including Banner Urgent Care, family clinics, home care and hospice services, pharmacies and a nursing registry. Banner Health is in six states: Arizona, California, Colorado, Nebraska, Nevada and Wyoming. For more information, visit [www.BannerHealth.com](http://www.BannerHealth.com).

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<http://bannerhealth.mediaroom.com/chloroquinephosphate>