Topic Brief: Ultraviolet Light for COVID-19

Date: 12/09/2020
Nomination Number: 0942

Purpose: This document summarizes the information addressing a nomination submitted on August 1, 2020 through the Effective Health Care Website. This information was used to inform the Evidence-based Practice Center (EPC) Program decisions about whether to produce an evidence report on the topic, and if so, what type of evidence report would be most suitable.

Issue: The nominator proposes the internal application of ultraviolet (UV) light as a method of eliminating SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes the novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Program Decision: While this is a novel idea that is being studied for COVID treatment, it is currently investigational.[1] The assessment of drugs and devices for approval for use in the US falls within the purview of the FDA. In addition, the EPC program synthesizes and appraises existing evidence, and does not support primary research. As such, this nomination does not meet the criteria for appropriateness.

Assessment Methods

We assessed nomination for priority for a systematic review or other AHRQ EHC report with a hierarchical process using established selection criteria. Assessment of each criteria determined the need to evaluate the next one.

1. Determine the *appropriateness* of the nominated topic for inclusion in the EHC program.
2. Establish the overall *importance* of a potential topic as representing a health or healthcare issue in the United States.
3. Determine the *desirability of new evidence review* by examining whether a new systematic review or other AHRQ product would be duplicative.
4. Assess the *potential impact* a new systematic review or other AHRQ product.
5. Assess whether the *current state of the evidence* allows for a systematic review or other AHRQ product (feasibility).
6. Determine the *potential value* of a new systematic review or other AHRQ product.

Related Resources

We identified additional information in the course of our assessment that might be useful.

- While UV light may be used effectively as a surface disinfectant, the World Health Organization (WHO) warns that application of UV light to the skin can cause irritation and other adverse effects. More information is available on the WHO's "Mythbusters" page.

References

1. Lawrence S. UV light, respiratory catheter for COVID-19 from Cedars-Sinai seeking emergency use. BioWorld. https://www.bioworld.com/articles/434719-uv-light-respiratory-catheter-for-covid-19-from-cedars-sinai-seeking-emergency-use. Accessed December 10, 2020.

Author

Charlotte Armstrong

Conflict of Interest: None of the investigators have any affiliations or financial involvement that conflicts with the material presented in this report.

Acknowledgements

Christine Chang

This report was developed by the Scientific Resource Center under contract to the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), Rockville, MD (Contract No. HHSA 290-2017-00003C). The findings and conclusions in this document are those of the author(s) who are responsible for its contents; the findings and conclusions do not necessarily represent the views of AHRQ. No statement in this article should be construed as an official position of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality or of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Persons using assistive technology may not be able to fully access information in this report. For assistance contact EPC@ahrq.hhs.