



Monitoring of medicinal products used during the COVID-19 epidemic

The monitoring of medicinal products purchased during the COVID-19 pandemic – which can be consulted on the AIFA website – allows to analyse the trend in consumption of COVID-19 medicines, both injections used in the inpatient setting and products purchased in local pharmacies. Comparisons are provided with the previous year (2019).

The monitoring is updated on a monthly basis and shows that:

- As expected, in 2020 the consumption of heparin and glucocorticoids for the first-line treatment of COVID-19 increased compared with 2019, in terms of both hospital purchases and purchases made at local pharmacies.
- Since April 2020, the consumption of antivirals that proved less effective against COVID-19 has decreased, and therefore such medicinal products are no longer recommended by AIFA for use against COVID-19 (Lopinavir/ritonavir, Darunavir/cobicistat, colchicine and hydroxicloroquine).
- During 2020 purchases of azithromycin rose despite AIFA not authorising the use of this product against COVID-19.
- Among non-specific COVID-19 medicines, an increase is registered in the use of general anaesthetics and injective cardiac stimulants in the hospital setting (both used in intensive and sub-intensive care units) compared with 2019.
- Hospital purchases of intravenous cancer medicines registered a decrease in 2019 and were partly offset by the growth in subcutaneous and oral products.
- Among medicines purchased in local pharmacies, consumption of anxiolytics increased compared with 2019, while the consumption of NSAIDs decreased.
- The use of medicinal products for erectile dysfunction and emergency contraceptives showed a significant reduction during the lockdown period (March/May 2020).

The information represented in the graphs comes from the NSIS flow of medicines traceability. It is expressed in terms of packs per 10,000 inhabitants per day and allows the timely and accurate monitoring of medicines use in Italy. The accessibility of all these data confirms the aim of AIFA to encourage the appropriate and homogeneous use of medicines throughout the country.

The data will also be made available in interactive and surfable format.