



1 April 2011

Tamiflu® (oseltamivir) Fact Sheet

- Tamiflu is an antiviral medicine. It is NOT a vaccine.¹
- It belongs to a group of medicines called neuraminidase inhibitors. These medicines attack the influenza virus and stop it spreading further inside your body.¹
- Tamiflu is active against influenza virus types A and B and can be used in people over one year of age.¹
- Tamiflu needs to be taken as soon as possible within the first or second day of onset of symptoms.¹
- The World Health Organisation (WHO) has indicated that the Mexican Swine Influenza A (H1N1) virus is sensitive to Tamiflu²
- If you have been exposed to someone with influenza, taking Tamiflu can prevent you from catching influenza. However you will need to take it within 48 hours of exposure to be most effective.¹
- **Tamiflu delivers:***
 - 38 percent reduction in the severity of symptoms⁴
 - 67 percent reduction in respiratory complications requiring antibiotics, such as bronchitis and pneumonia, in otherwise healthy individuals⁵
 - 37 percent reduction in the duration of influenza illness³

*compared to placebo.
- Tamiflu is taken orally, either as a capsule or a liquid (suspension) formulation.¹
- The adult treatment dose for seasonal influenza is one capsule (75 mg) twice daily for 5 days. For prevention of influenza following close contact with an infected individual the adult dose is one capsule (75 mg) daily for at least 10 days or in a community outbreak once daily for up to 6 weeks.¹
- Tamiflu is well tolerated with the most common side effects being nausea and vomiting³
- Between 1st April and 30th November inclusive, Tamiflu may be sold by a registered pharmacist who is satisfied that the medicine is for the TREATMENT of a consumer who is resident in New Zealand, is 12 years old or more, and currently has

symptoms of influenza. Treatment should begin within 48 hours of the onset of symptoms. Note that a pharmacist is not permitted to supply Tamiflu for prevention of influenza without a prescription and patients must see their doctor in this instance.⁷

- A prescription from a doctor is required when Tamiflu is used:
 - For treatment of children <12 years of age^{1,7}
 - For prevention of influenza^{1,7}

Differences between symptoms of influenza and the common cold⁶

Signs & Symptoms	Influenza	Cold
Fever/chills	Usually present, high	Uncommon
Chest discomfort/cough	Common	Mild to moderate, hacking cough
Headache	Very common	Uncommon
Aches and pains	Common and often severe	Mild
Fatigue and weakness	Can last up to two-three weeks	Mild
Extreme exhaustion		Never
Stuffy nose/sneezing/sore throat	Very common initially Sometimes	Common

Adapted from MedBroadcast, Influenza. Available from www.medbroadcast.com

- Tamiflu is a prescription medicine. If you have any further questions on any of the information above, talk to your doctor or consult the Consumer Medicine Information (CMI) at www.medsafe.govt.nz

References

1. Tamiflu® (oseltamivir) Data Sheet. Roche Products (New Zealand) Limited. 23 September 2010.
2. WHO. Influenza-like illness outbreak in the US and Mexico. Transcript of Global Telephone News Conference with Dr Margaret Chan, Director General, World Health Organization, 1 March 2010. Available from http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/swineflu_presstranscript_2009_04_25.pdf Accessed 1 March 2010.

3. Nicholson KG et al. Efficacy and safety of oseltamivir in treatment of acute influenza: a randomised controlled trial. *Lancet* 2000;355:1845-1850.
4. Treanor JJ et al. Efficacy and safety of the oral neuraminidase inhibitor oseltamivir in treating acute influenza: a randomized controlled trial. *JAMA* 2000;283:1016-24.
5. Kaiser L et al. Impact of oseltamivir treatment on influenza-related lower respiratory tract complications and hospitalizations. *Arch Intern Med* 2003;163:1667-1672.
6. The difference between influenza and the common cold. MedBroadcast. Available from http://www.medbroadcast.com/channel_health_features_details.asp?health_feature_id=69&article_id=147&channel_id=2014&relation_id=13311 Accessed April 2009.
7. Medsafe. Extract from *New Zealand Gazette*, 5/10/2006, No. 114, p3375.

Consumer information - what you should know about Tamiflu®

Tamiflu® (oseltamivir 75 mg capsules and 12 mg/mL oral suspension) is a **Prescription Medicine** for the treatment and prevention of influenza (flu) in adults and children 1 year of age and older. Tamiflu is subject to classification conditions, which allow it to be sold by a pharmacist under certain conditions. Ask your pharmacist or doctor for current information regarding these conditions. **Do not take Tamiflu** if you have had it in the past and experienced an allergic-type reaction while taking it. **Tell your doctor or pharmacist if** you have kidney disease or hereditary fructose intolerance. **Possible side effects:** *Common:* nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, stomach pain, and headache. In children, in addition to above, ear problems or infection, nose bleeds, discharge from eyes and breathlessness or wheezing. *Rare:* Sudden signs of allergy such as rash, swelling of face, lips or tongue. Chest infection with fever, chills and shortness of breath. Yellowing of the skin, dark coloured urine or severe stomach pain. Diarrhoea with blood. Patients or their caregivers should look out for signs of abnormal behaviour (convulsions, delirium, severe confusion).

Ask your doctor or pharmacist if Tamiflu is right for you. Use strictly as directed. If symptoms continue or you have side effects or would like further information, please contact your health professional or visit www.medsafe.govt.nz for Consumer Medicine Information. **Tamiflu is an unfunded medicine. You will need to pay for this medicine. A consultation fee may apply.**



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