



Communicable Disease Control Services Division

Dolores J. Gunn MD
Director

HEALTH ALERT: Further Recommendations for the Use of Oseltamivir on Circulating Influenza A (H1N1) Viruses

In December the CDC issued interim recommendations for antiviral treatment and chemoprophylaxis of influenza during the 2008-09 influenza season. When influenza A (H1N1) virus infection or exposure is suspected, zanamivir or a combination of oseltamivir and rimantadine are more appropriate options than oseltamivir alone.

Through the week ending 1/10/09, the CDC reports that 83% of all typed influenza isolates are Influenza A. Of these, 89% have been subtyped as H1N1.

Therefore the use of oseltamivir (Tamiflu) alone is unlikely to be effective in treating influenza this season.

The 2008-09 influenza vaccine is expected to be effective in preventing or reducing the severity of illness with currently circulating influenza viruses, including oseltamivir-resistant influenza A (H1N1) virus strains. Since influenza activity remains low and is expected to increase in the weeks and months to come, **CDC recommends that influenza vaccination efforts continue.**

For more information you can visit the CDC site:

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/antivirals/index.htm> or contact the Saint Louis County Department of Health at 314-615-1630.

Interim Recommendations for the Selection of Antiviral Treatment Using Laboratory Test Results and Viral Surveillance Data, United States, 2008-09 season

Rapid antigen or other laboratory test	Predominant virus(es) in community	Preferred med(s)	Alternative med(s)
Not done or negative, but clinical suspicion for influenza	H1N1 or unk	Zanamivir	Oseltamivir + Rimantadine*
Positive A	H1N1 or unk	Zanamivir	Oseltamivir + Rimantadine*

*Amantadine can be substituted for rimantadine but has increased risk of adverse events. Human data are lacking to support the benefits of combination antiviral treatment of influenza; however, these interim recommendations are intended to assist clinicians treating patients who might be infected with oseltamivir-resistant influenza A (H1N1) virus.

Saint Louis County Department of Health will be utilizing this system to provide health care providers with necessary information during an emergency. In the event of an emergency, please watch for fax updates to ensure that you have critical information concerning the welfare of your patients and community.