

# TAMIFLU<sup>®</sup> (Oseltamivir)

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*This fact sheet should be read in conjunction with the influenza fact sheet which can be found at [www.health.act.gov.au/influenza](http://www.health.act.gov.au/influenza).*

## What is Tamiflu<sup>®</sup>?

Tamiflu<sup>®</sup> (Oseltamivir) is an antiviral medication that is used for the treatment and prevention of influenza. Tamiflu<sup>®</sup> attacks the influenza virus and stops it from spreading inside your body.

## Who should take Tamiflu<sup>®</sup>?

People who have influenza may be prescribed Tamiflu<sup>®</sup> by their doctor to reduce the severity or duration of their illness and to reduce their ability to pass the infection on to others. It may also reduce their risk of developing complications from influenza, such as bronchitis, pneumonia and sinusitis.

Sometimes Tamiflu<sup>®</sup> may be prescribed for people following close contact with a person infected with influenza, to prevent them from developing influenza.

To be effective, Tamiflu<sup>®</sup> should be commenced within 48 hours of first symptoms or first contact with an infected person. Tamiflu<sup>®</sup> may not be effective if given after this time.

Tamiflu<sup>®</sup> has no effect on the common cold or other respiratory infections. Tamiflu<sup>®</sup> is only available with a doctor's prescription.

## Who should not take Tamiflu<sup>®</sup>?

Tamiflu<sup>®</sup> is generally not recommended for those who are pregnant, breastfeeding, or for children less than one year old.

If you have been prescribed Tamiflu<sup>®</sup> it is important to let your doctor know if you have any other health concerns, especially kidney disease. It is also important to tell your doctor if you are on any other medications. This may affect whether you are able to take Tamiflu<sup>®</sup>, or how you take it.

Do not take Tamiflu<sup>®</sup> if you are allergic to oseltamivir phosphate or any of the ingredients in Tamiflu<sup>®</sup>.

## How is Tamiflu<sup>®</sup> taken?

Tamiflu<sup>®</sup> is available as a capsule or liquid suspension. The dosage varies depending on whether it is being used for prevention or treatment of influenza. Your doctor will prescribe the right dose for you. You should take Tamiflu<sup>®</sup> exactly as your doctor prescribes.

Tamiflu<sup>®</sup> should be taken at the same time each day. If you forget a dose, take it as soon as possible. If it is almost time for the next dose, then skip the missed dose and take the next dose when it is due. Do not take a double dose. Speak to your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure what to do or have any questions.

It does not matter whether you take Tamiflu<sup>®</sup> with food, but this may help if Tamiflu<sup>®</sup> upsets your stomach.

## Are there side effects from taking Tamiflu<sup>®</sup>?

Tamiflu<sup>®</sup> helps most people with influenza but may cause unwanted side effects in some people. The most common side effects are mild to moderate nausea and vomiting, diarrhoea and stomach pain. Let your doctor know if you are concerned about any side effects.

## Should I still have the influenza vaccination?

Tamiflu<sup>®</sup> does not take the place of the yearly influenza vaccination. You should discuss having the influenza vaccine with your doctor.

## Need more information?

For more information about Tamiflu<sup>®</sup> or influenza, contact your doctor or pharmacist, or call the Health Protection Service, Communicable Disease Control Information Line during business hours on (02) 6205 2155.

**The Communicable Disease Control Section of the Health Protection Service** is responsible for the investigation and surveillance of notifiable or infectious conditions in the ACT in order to control or prevent their spread in the community. This includes the promotion of immunisation, education and other strategies that help to limit the spread of diseases.

Influenza is a notifiable condition. Cases are notified to ACT Health.

## Acknowledgements

Tamiflu<sup>®</sup> Product Information, 2013

Tamiflu<sup>®</sup> Consumer Medicine Information 2013.

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