

- When influenza is circulating in the community, oseltamivir is an option recommended (in accordance with UK licensing) for the treatment of influenza in at-risk patients who can start treatment within 48 hours of the onset of symptoms. (National surveillance schemes, including those run by Public Health England, should be used to indicate when influenza is circulating in the community.)
- During local outbreaks of influenza-like illness, when there is a high level of certainty that influenza is present, oseltamivir may be used for treatment in at-risk patients living in long-term residential or nursing homes.

At risk patients include those aged over 65 years or those who have one or more of the following conditions:

- chronic respiratory disease (including asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease);
- chronic heart disease;
- chronic renal disease;
- chronic liver disease;
- chronic neurological disease;
- immunosuppression;
- diabetes mellitus.

The Department of Health in England has advised (November 2010 and April 2011) that 'at risk patients' also includes patients under 65 years of age who are at risk of developing medical complications from influenza (treatment only) or women who are pregnant.

This guidance does not cover the circumstances of a pandemic, an impending pandemic, or a widespread epidemic of a new strain of influenza to which there is little or no immunity in the community.

www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta168

NHS restrictions Tamiflu[®] is not prescribable in NHS primary care except for the treatment and prophylaxis of influenza as indicated in the NICE guidance; endorse prescription 'SLS'.

- **MEDICINAL FORMS** There can be variation in the licensing of different medicines containing the same drug. Forms available from special-order manufacturers include: oral suspension, oral solution

Oral suspension

CAUTIONARY AND ADVISORY LABELS 9
EXCIPIENTS: May contain Sorbitol

▶ Tamiflu (Roche Products Ltd)

Oseltamivir (as Oseltamivir phosphate) 6 mg per 1 ml Tamiflu 6mg/ml oral suspension sugar-free | 65 ml [PoM] £10.27 DT = £10.27

Capsule

CAUTIONARY AND ADVISORY LABELS 9

▶ Tamiflu (Roche Products Ltd)

Oseltamivir (as Oseltamivir phosphate) 30 mg Tamiflu 30mg capsules | 10 capsule [PoM] £7.71

Oseltamivir (as Oseltamivir phosphate) 45 mg Tamiflu 45mg capsules | 10 capsule [PoM] £15.41

Oseltamivir (as Oseltamivir phosphate) 75 mg Tamiflu 75mg capsules | 10 capsule [PoM] £15.41

Zanamivir

- **DRUG ACTION** Reduces replication of influenza A and B viruses by inhibiting viral neuraminidase.

● INDICATIONS AND DOSE

Post-exposure prophylaxis of influenza

▶ BY INHALATION OF POWDER

- ▶ Child 5–17 years: 10 mg once daily for 10 days

Prevention of influenza during an epidemic

▶ BY INHALATION OF POWDER

- ▶ Child 5–17 years: 10 mg once daily for up to 28 days

Treatment of influenza

▶ BY INHALATION OF POWDER

- ▶ Child 5–17 years: 10 mg twice daily for 5 days (for up to 10 days if resistance to oseltamivir suspected)

- **UNLICENSED USE** Use of zanamivir for up to 10 days if resistance to oseltamivir suspected is an unlicensed duration.

- **CAUTIONS** Asthma · chronic pulmonary disease · uncontrolled chronic illness

CAUTIONS, FURTHER INFORMATION

- ▶ Asthma and chronic pulmonary disease Risk of bronchospasm—short-acting bronchodilator should be available. Avoid in severe asthma unless close monitoring possible and appropriate facilities available to treat bronchospasm.
- **SIDE-EFFECTS**
- ▶ **Common or very common** Skin reactions
- ▶ **Uncommon** Bronchospasm · dehydration · dyspnoea · oropharyngeal oedema · presyncope · severe cutaneous adverse reactions (SCARs) · throat tightness
- ▶ **Rare or very rare** Face oedema
- ▶ **Frequency not known** Behaviour abnormal · delirium · hallucination · level of consciousness decreased · psychiatric disorder · seizure

SIDE-EFFECTS, FURTHER INFORMATION Neurological and psychiatric disorders occur more commonly in children and adolescents.

- **PREGNANCY** Although safety data are limited, zanamivir can be used in women who are pregnant when the potential benefit outweighs the risk (e.g. during a pandemic). Use only if potential benefit outweighs risk (e.g. during a pandemic).
- **BREAST FEEDING** Although safety data are limited, zanamivir can be used in women who are breast-feeding when the potential benefit outweighs the risk (e.g. during a pandemic). Amount probably too small to be harmful; use only if potential benefit outweighs risk (e.g. during a pandemic).
- **DIRECTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATION** Other inhaled drugs should be administered before zanamivir.
- **PRESCRIBING AND DISPENSING INFORMATION** Except for the treatment and prophylaxis of influenza as indicated in the NICE guidance; endorse prescription 'SLS'.

- **NATIONAL FUNDING/ACCESS DECISIONS**

NICE decisions

- ▶ **Oseltamivir, zanamivir, and amantadine for prophylaxis of influenza (September 2008)** NICE TA158
Zanamivir is **not** a substitute for vaccination, which remains the most effective way of preventing illness from influenza.
- Zanamivir is **not** recommended for seasonal prophylaxis against influenza.
- When influenza is circulating in the community, zanamivir is an option recommended (in accordance with UK licensing) for post-exposure prophylaxis in at-risk patients who are not effectively protected by influenza vaccine, and who have been in close contact with someone suffering from influenza-like illness in the same household or residential setting. Zanamivir should be given within 36 hours of exposure to influenza. (National surveillance schemes, including those run by Public Health England, should be used to indicate when influenza is circulating in the community).
- During local outbreaks of influenza-like illness, when there is a high level of certainty that influenza is present, zanamivir may be used for post-exposure prophylaxis in at-risk patients (regardless of influenza vaccination) living in long-term residential or nursing homes.