

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



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DIRECTOR OF HEALTH

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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MEDICAL ADVISORY: Guidelines for Prescribing Antivirals and Update on Current Supply

Dear Hawai'i Healthcare Provider,

The Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) requests your assistance in maintaining the current supply of the antiviral agents, oseltamivir (Tamiflu) and zanamivir (Relenza), by judiciously prescribing antivirals only for patients with laboratory-confirmed influenza infection. Prophylaxis should be limited to persons who have been exposed to laboratory-confirmed cases of influenza and who either have risk factors for severe illness or who may expose high risk persons to influenza if infected. Providers should refrain from providing prescriptions for persons who are otherwise healthy or do not fulfill the above criteria. The ultimate intent is to preserve the supply of these medications for hospitalized patients and patients at high risk for complications from influenza.

Because of multiple recent reports of local pharmacy shortages of oseltamivir and zanamivir, DOH has contacted manufacturers and distributors at the regional and national levels. They indicate that, based on projected demand and seasonal influenza surveillance data, there is **no** anticipated **shortage** of these medications in the supply chain. Preliminary prescribing data collected by DOH indicate the shortage is the result of an unusually large increase in antiviral prescriptions over the past several days here in Hawai'i that have depleted normal pharmacy on-hand stocks. This increase is not consistent with influenza surveillance data (<http://hawaii.gov/health/family-child-health/contagious-disease/influenza/Influenza%20Reports/Influenza%20Surveillance%20Week%2016%202009.pdf>), which demonstrate that our illness activity remains at a stable and low level. DOH will continue to track prescribing information for these antiviral agents very closely.

According to pharmaceutical distributors, these antiviral medications will be delivered to local pharmacies per routine resupply schedules with some supplies expected to arrive in areas of Hawai'i as early as today. With your assistance in judiciously prescribing antivirals, DOH does not anticipate an ongoing functional shortage of oseltamivir and zanamivir in Hawai'i.

If you have questions about antiviral prescribing, please contact DOH at the numbers below:

- O'ahu (Disease Investigation Branch) (808) 586-4586
- Maui District Health Office (808) 984-8213
- Kaua'i District Health Office..... (808) 241-3563
- Big Island District Health Office (Hilo) (808) 933-0912
- Big Island District Health Office (Kona)..... (808) 322-4877

- After hours on O'ahu (808) 566-5049
- After hours on neighbor islands..... 1(800) 360-2575 (toll free)

We appreciate the assistance and partnership of the medical community in maintaining responsible stewardship of antiviral medications for our patients and our community.

Sincerely,



Sarah Y. Park, MD, FAAP
State Epidemiologist