



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P.O. Box 3378
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96801-3378

August 13, 2009

MEDICAL ADVISORY: Clarification of Isolation Recommendations for Influenza-like Illness

Dear Hawai'i Healthcare Provider,

HDOH would like to clarify recent influenza-like illness isolation recommendations, which align with the U.S. Centers for Control and Prevention's recent recommendations (<http://cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance/exclusion.htm>).

Recommended Measures to Reduce Influenza Transmission

For all patients who fulfill influenza-like illness (ILI) criteria,¹ the following is advised:

- **If healthcare personnel**, he/she should **remain at home** from work and other activities outside their home **for 7 days or 24 hours post fever resolution without antipyretics**, whichever is longer, regardless of antiviral treatment.² *Healthcare personnel are defined as persons, including employees, students, contractors, attending clinicians, and volunteers, whose activities involve contact with patients in a healthcare or laboratory setting.* This exclusion period also applies to those in any other high risk settings.
- **For all others**, patients should be advised to **remain at home** from work, school, and other activities outside their home **for at least 24 hours post fever resolution without antipyretics**,³ regardless of antiviral treatment.
- Frequent hand washing or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizing gel
- Covering their nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing

Currently, management of your patients with ILI should be based on clinical presentation and status as well as past medical history, not on test results. Please note that HDOH does not routinely contact patients to relay testing results; patients are only contacted if part of an investigation. Providers should communicate test results, if any are available, directly to their patients.

¹ ILI case definition: fever $\geq 100^{\circ}\text{F}$ (37.8°C) with cough and/or sore throat, and no other confirmed etiology.

² There are little and conflicting data to support otherwise; time period may be shortened only if proven negative for influenza by RT-PCR or an etiology other than influenza is laboratory confirmed.

³ For some, this period may be 3-5 days. Viral shedding may still occur for some time after this period; however, based on current epidemiological data, maximal shedding is thought to occur during the febrile period with most secondary transmission also occurring during that period. Infection prevention measures should be strongly encouraged in patients returning to work or school.

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HDOH interim recommendations are for clinicians to strongly consider early empiric use of oseltamivir (Tamiflu[®]); or alternate zanamivir [Relenza[®]]⁴ monotherapy for treatment of presumed influenza infection in patients who are *severely ill and/or considered at high risk⁵ for complications* from influenza.

If you have questions about or need to report a suspect case that meets priority criteria,⁶ please contact HDOH 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 partnership of the medical community in protecting the health of the people of Hawai‘i against all influenza infections.

Sincerely,



Sarah Y. Park, MD, FAAP
State Epidemiologist
Hawaii Department of Health

⁴ Refer to CDC website, <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/recommendations.htm>, for specific dosing recommendations.

⁵ Includes those who are age <5 or ≥65 years; have chronic pulmonary (e.g. asthma), cardiovascular (except hypertension), renal, hepatic, hematological (including sickle cell disease), neurologic, neuromuscular, or metabolic (including diabetes mellitus) disorders; are immunosuppressed, including secondary to medication or HIV; are pregnant; are age <19 years and on chronic aspirin therapy; or are residents of nursing homes and other chronic-care facilities.

⁶ Influenza testing prioritization includes persons who fulfill ILI definition and are in at least one of the following categories: severely ill and require hospitalization; are part of a HDOH disease outbreak investigation; have history of travel outside the United States in the 10 days preceding illness onset; work in high risk occupations, e.g. health care workers engaged in direct patient care; potentially at high risk for complications. Please refer to the June 29, 2009 Medical Advisory at http://hawaii.gov/health/about/pr/clinical_info.html for further details.