

Letterkenny University Hospital - LUH Antimicrobial Prescribing Policy/Guidelines: Antiviral Guidance for Treatment and Prophylaxis of Influenza

Antiviral Guidance for Treatment and Prophylaxis of Influenza

Detailed guidance on the use of antiviral agents for the treatment and prophylaxis of influenza is available on the [HSE/HPSC website](#) (please consult).

Antiviral treatment

- Antiviral treatment is recommended as **early as possible** for any patient with suspected or confirmed influenza who is hospitalised due to influenza.
- Any patient who, while in hospital for another indication, develops influenza, should be **assessed for risk from influenza complications** (as below). Antiviral treatment is recommended as early as possible for those at higher risk from influenza complications (see table below).

Higher risk from influenza complications includes:

1. Age 65 years and over
2. Pregnancy (including up to two weeks post-partum)
3. Children aged <2 years of age
4. Chronic respiratory disease including those on medication for asthma
5. Chronic heart, kidney, liver or neurological disease
6. Diabetes mellitus
7. Haemoglobinopathies
8. Immunosuppression (whether due to treatment or disease e.g. HIV)
9. Morbid obesity (BMI ≥ 40)
10. Those with any condition that can compromise respiratory function (e.g cognitive dysfunction, spinal cord injury, seizure disorder, or other neuromuscular disorder), especially those attending special schools/day centres.
11. Those with Down Syndrome
12. Persons with moderate to severe neurodevelopmental disorders such as cerebral palsy and intellectual disability
13. Residents of nursing homes or Residential Care Facilities.

Antiviral regimens for influenza			
Antiviral treatment	1 st line	Alternative therapy	Duration is generally 5 days . There is limited evidence to support treating for longer duration in those with severe influenza (e.g critically ill in ICU) and in severely immunosuppressed patients. Discussion with Microbiology is recommended.
	Oseltamivir PO/NG 75mg every 12 hours	Zanamivir may be indicated for patients if severely immunocompromised – please discuss with Microbiology .	
Antiviral prophylaxis	Chemoprophylaxis (generally PO/NG Oseltamivir) may be considered for people at higher risk from influenza complications (as above, 1 to 13) who have had recent close contact with a person with influenza. Details on use of Oseltamivir for prophylaxis of high risk contacts, including dose and duration are to be found in the HPSC/ HSE guidance . For additional information on renal dosing please see the renal dosing section .		