

OSELTAMIVIR

Other names: Tamiflu®



Important note: The following information is intended to add to, not replace, the knowledge and judgment of your doctor, pharmacist or other health care professional.

Why you are taking this medicine?

Tamiflu (oseltamivir) belongs to a group of medicines known as anti-virals. Tamiflu attacks and stops the influenza virus from spreading inside your body. It does not work against other viruses or bacteria that can cause illness similar to influenza or those that can cause respiratory (chest) infections.

Oseltamivir is not a substitute for seasonal flu vaccination.

Tamiflu may also be used to prevent people from getting seasonal influenza. However vaccination is the best protection against influenza, which is why people are encouraged to get immunised against seasonal influenza every year.

In a pandemic, Tamiflu was effective against the strains of avian influenza (H5N1) circulating in birds in Asia; however we do not know if Tamiflu will cure people sick with the bird flu virus but at least it will prevent the bird flu spreading.

When to take this medicine

The dose of the Tamiflu is best taken with food at the same time each day until the course is completed.

If you miss a dose

Take your dose as soon as possible except when it is close to the time for your next dose. If it is almost time for next dose, skip the missed dose and return to your regular dosing schedule. You should not take two doses at the same time.

Side Effects

Unfortunately as well as having good effects, most medicines have some effects on your body that are unwanted. These are called *side effects*.

Call your doctor **immediately** and stop taking Tamiflu if you have any of these side effects:

- allergic reaction (e.g. swelling of face and lips, shortness of breath)
- severe rash

Most people taking Tamiflu experience no side effects.

Common side effects include:

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Abdominal (stomach) pain

These side effects most commonly occur only after the first dose or two of Tamiflu and will usually stop as treatment continues. These common side effects don't happen as much if you take Tamiflu with food.

Less common side effects include:

- Headache
- Fatigue (tiredness)
- Nose bleeds (epistaxis)
- Ear disorders (including otitis media)
- Red eye (conjunctivitis)
- Diarrhoea
- Dizziness
- Sleeplessness

Other Medicines

Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any other medicine including herbal or complementary products and medicines you can buy without a prescription.

Preventing the spread of the flu virus

The spread of the flu virus can be prevented by following good hygiene practices:

- Use clean tissues to cover your mouth and nose when you cough and sneeze
- Discard used tissues in the bin
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and hot water

Remember to keep warm, drink plenty of fluids and stay away from crowds.

Storage

Keep all medicines out of reach of children.

Tamiflu suspension should be stored in a fridge. Do not freeze.

Read this leaflet and discuss any questions you have about your medicines with your doctor or pharmacist.