



January 14, 2015

**LACDPH Health Update:  
ACCESS TO ANTIVIRAL MEDICATION FOR TREATMENT OF INFLUENZA**

*This message is intended for pharmacies and healthcare facilities as well as emergency medicine, internal medicine, urgent care, infectious disease, and primary care providers. Please distribute as appropriate.*

**Key message**

- Local spot shortages have been reported for some formulations of neuraminidase inhibitors (oseltamivir, zanamivir, and peramivir).
- There are no current national shortages of neuraminidase inhibitors.
- CDC has established a mechanism for pharmacies, hospitals and other healthcare facilities experiencing difficulty accessing antiviral supplies through their usual vendors to request the needed antiviral medications.
- Below is a memo with instructions for pharmacies, hospitals, and other health care facilities experiencing difficulties stocking these antiviral medications.



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January 14, 2015

TO: Los Angeles County Health Care Partners

FROM: Jeffrey D. Gunzenhauser, M.D., M.P.H.  
Interim Health Officer

**SUBJECT: ACCESS TO ANTIVIRAL MEDICATION FOR TREATMENT OF INFLUENZA**

Widespread influenza activity is being reported throughout the United States, with influenza A (H3N2) viruses most common. H3N2-predominant flu seasons have been associated with more hospitalizations and deaths in older people and young children in the past. In addition, approximately two-thirds of H3N2 viruses that have been tested at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are antigenically or genetically different from the H3N2 vaccine virus, which suggests that vaccine effectiveness may be reduced this season. CDC recommends the use of antiviral medications for treatment of influenza as an important adjunct to the annual influenza vaccine and that all hospitalized, severely ill, and high risk patients with suspected influenza be treated as soon as possible with antivirals without waiting for confirmatory influenza testing. (<http://emergency.cdc.gov/han/han00375.asp>).

There has been increased utilization of antiviral medications and, while there are no current national shortages of oseltamivir (Tamiflu), zanamivir (Relenza), or peramivir (Rapivab), local spot shortages have been reported. Therefore, CDC has established a mechanism for pharmacies, hospitals and other healthcare facilities experiencing difficulty accessing antiviral supplies through their usual vendors to request the needed antiviral medications.

**PHARMACIES**

Pharmacies that are having difficulties getting orders filled should contact their distributor or the manufacturer directly. For Tamiflu order fulfillment and support questions, pharmacies may also call: Genentech's Customer Operations: (800) 551-2231, 6 a.m. - 5 p.m. PST Monday through Friday.

**HOSPITALS & OTHER HEALTHCARE FACILITIES**

For hospitals and other healthcare facilities experiencing difficulty obtaining large orders of antiviral drugs for institutional outbreaks, CDC is operating a call center to coordinate with commercial partners to facilitate the rapid resolution. Beginning on Monday, January 12, 2015, the Division of Strategic National

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Stockpile is available from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., EST Monday through Friday, to assist healthcare facilities by coordinating with supply chain partners to rapidly redirect supply to the identified location. You may contact the CDC Antiviral Call Center at 404-553-7675 or [dsns-Request@cdc.gov](mailto:dsns-Request@cdc.gov) for assistance with facility specific unmet antiviral drug supply needs. For emergency needs after hours, you may contact the Department of Public Health's Emergency Desk at (213) 989-7140 or [phemergdesk@ph.lacounty.gov](mailto:phemergdesk@ph.lacounty.gov).

JDG:db

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