

NEW MEXICO HEALTH UPDATE – H1N1 Virus Update

THIS IS A NEW MEXICO HEALTH UPDATE -- Influenza A (H1N1) Update No. 15
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During the last week of April the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released oseltamivir (Tamiflu) and zanamivir (Relenza) from the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) to New Mexico. The Department of Health (NMDOH) has now redistributed about 60,000 courses of antivirals to more than 150 hospitals and clinics statewide (list available at http://nmhealth.org/FLU/seasonal/swine_flu.html).

Completion of this instate distribution phase ensures that health care providers throughout the State will be able to treat all hospitalized patients and high-risk outpatients with confirmed, probable or suspected novel influenza A (H1N1). Patients who are at higher risk for seasonal influenza complications include people 65 years and older, children younger than five years old, pregnant women, and people of any age with chronic medical conditions.

Antivirals may also be considered for post-exposure chemoprophylaxis (PEP) for: 1) close contacts of cases (confirmed, probable, or suspected) who are at high risk for complications of influenza, and 2) health care personnel, public health workers, or first responders who have had a recognized, unprotected close contact exposure to a person with novel (H1N1) influenza virus infection (confirmed, probable, or suspected) during that person's infectious period.

Pre-exposure chemoprophylaxis is not recommended.

To conserve our antiviral supply NMDOH requests that health care providers strictly adhere to these recommendations. NMDOH may ask health care providers and facilities to replenish stockpiles used for indications not listed above.

At this time antiviral medications are also available through retail pharmacies. Patients with the ability to cover the costs should obtain antivirals through these outlets.

To help NMDOH monitor antiviral use, health care providers will be asked to report basic demographic information and identify a patient risk category for each antiviral course released from the stockpile. Reporting will be conducted using the web-based NM Statewide Immunization Information System (NMSIIS) (preferred method) or by faxing a data collection form (available at http://nmhealth.org/FLU/seasonal/swine_flu.html).

Clinicians who are not affiliated with a participating hospital or clinic can fill out a regular prescription form and a data collection form for the patient. Encourage a non-ill person to deliver the forms and pick up the antivirals at the local stockpile site on behalf of the patient.

In you have any questions about information in this update you can call the Epidemiology and Response Division at (505) 827-0006 to speak with the epidemiologist on call. For more information about CDC recommendations for antiviral use, see <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/recommendations.htm>.

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If you have questions about the Health Alert Network, please contact the HAN at health.alert@cw.nmhealth.org.