



INLAND EMPIRE HEALTH PLAN

# PHARMACY TIMES

BY IEHP PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

October 20, 2009

Dear IEHP Pharmacy Providers,

This letter is a reminder that as we enter the flu season we face unprecedented new challenges with the emergence of the **H1N1 flu virus**. IEHP is currently monitoring the latest information regarding clinical and treatment guidance and will post any new information on our website at: [www.iehp.org](http://www.iehp.org).

**IEHP Recommendations for the Use of Antiviral Medications in the Treatment and Prevention of Influenza for the 2009-2010 Season adapted from current CDC guidelines** <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/recommendations.htm>, last updated 09/22/09

- Most healthy persons who develop an illness consistent with influenza, or persons who appear to be recovering from influenza, do not need antiviral medications for treatment or prophylaxis. However, persons presenting with suspected influenza and more severe symptoms such as evidence of lower respiratory tract infection or clinical deterioration requiring hospitalization should receive prompt treatment with Tamiflu or Relenza, regardless of previous health or age.
- Early empiric treatment with **TAMIFLU®** (oseltamivir) or **RELENZA®** (zanamivir) should be considered for persons with suspected or confirmed influenza who are at higher risk for complications including (at least one):
  - Children younger than 5 years old
  - Persons aged 65 years or older
  - Pregnant women
  - Persons of any age with certain chronic medical or immunosuppressive conditions
  - Persons younger than 19 years of age who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy
- Treatment, when indicated, should be initiated as early as possible because studies show that treatment initiated after 48 hours of illness onset is unlikely to provide clinical benefit.

**FDA Approved Dosing**

		<b>TAMIFLU®</b>	<b>RELENZA®</b>
Child	Wt: ≤ 15 kg	30 mg BID for 5 days	10 mg inhaled BID (approximately 12 hours apart) for 5 days
	Wt: 16-23 kg	45 mg BID for 5 days	
	Wt: 24-40 kg	60 mg BID for 5 days	
	Wt: > 40 kg	75 mg cap BID for 5 days	
Adult	---	75 mg cap BID for 5 days	10 mg inhaled BID (approximately 12 hours apart) for 5 days

**Number of Tamiflu 75mg Capsules and Amount of Vehicle needed to prepare the Total Volume of a Compounded Oral Suspension (15mg/mL)**

<b>Total Volume of Compounded oral suspension needed</b>	<b>30mL</b>	<b>40mL</b>	<b>50mL</b>	<b>60mL</b>
Body Weight (kg)	15kg or less	16-23kg	24-40kg	---
Dose (mg)	30mg	45mg	60mg	---
Volume per dose (15mg/mL)	2 mL	3 mL	4 mL	---
Treatment Dose (for 5 days)	2 mL BID	3 mL BID	4 mL BID	---
Required Total Number of Tamiflu 75mg capsules	6 capsules	8 capsules	10 capsules	---
Required Total Volume of vehicle (Cherry syrup or ora-sweet SF)	29 mL	38.5 mL	48 mL	---
IEHP Compounding Instructions	Bill 6 capsules + compounding fee	Bill 8 capsules + compounding fee	Bill 10 capsules + compounding fee	Dispense Gelcap only

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**Question:** What should a pharmacy do if an IEHP member brings in a prescription for Tamiflu or Relenza Friday (after 5 pm), Saturday, or Sunday?

**Answer:** IEHP authorizes pharmacies to dispense a five (5) day supply for a diagnosis of active influenza if they meet IEHP criteria. The information should be documented on the Rx and a PER needs to be submitted the following Monday for reimbursement (For dosing information please refer to FDA approved dosing parameters).

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**Question:** What should a pharmacy do if a prescription is written for Tamiflu Suspension and it is out of stock?

**Answer:** IEHP requires all pharmacies that are compounding Tamiflu Suspension (please refer to manufacturer label for compounding instructions) to submit a PER including compounding sheet and a copy of the Rx. All PERS for Tamiflu will be reviewed as quickly as possible (usually within 24 hours). When processing a compound please use NDC 99999-9999-99 and not the NDC for Tamiflu. \*\*Please note that pharmacies should bill only for the amount of gelcaps used in compounding the prescription and NOT for the entire box unless indicated.\*\*

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**Question:** What should a pharmacy do if a prescription for Tamiflu is written for a dose not approved by the FDA?

**Answer:** IEHP requests that pharmacies verify the dose for Tamiflu based on the FDA approved label before submitting PERs to IEHP (please refer to dosing information provided). This will reduce the time required to review these requests and allow members to receive their medication as soon as possible. There is no clinical information that doses outside the approved label will provide any added clinical benefit, and will not be approved.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,



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Clinical Pharmacist, Pharmaceutical Services