

Guidelines for prescribing oseltamivir for seasonal influenza in 2022

Queensland Infection Clinical Network

Background

The combination of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic with the forthcoming seasonal influenza epidemic is likely to place a compounding burden on health services.

The purpose of this guideline is to remove administrative barriers to the use of oseltamivir in patients at high risk of adverse outcomes from influenza by facilitating compliance with restrictions in the List of Approved Medicines (LAM) (<https://qlam.com.au/Home>).

This guideline is not intended to replace local hospital prescribing guidelines, clinical judgement or specialist advice. The detailed guidelines referenced below should be consulted for advice regarding dosing and duration of therapy.

Scope

This guideline applies to patients managed by Queensland Health hospital and health services.

Oseltamivir prescribing guidelines

Children

For children, prescribe oseltamivir as recommended in the Queensland CEQ-endorsed Tri-State Paediatric Improvement Collaborative clinical practice guideline:

https://www.rch.org.au/clinicalguide/guideline_index/Influenza/

Adults

For adults:

- who are confirmed to have influenza by PCR, or
- for whom there is a strong clinical suspicion of influenza and there are significant barriers to accessing timely PCR results (e.g. in rural areas)

Prescribe oseltamivir for the indications in the Therapeutic Guidelines: antibiotic:

<https://tgldcdp.tg.org.au/viewTopic?topicfile=influenza> as listed below

1. Regardless of the duration of symptoms, for patients:

- with established complications
- who need to be admitted to hospital for management of influenza
- with moderate-severity or high-severity community-acquired pneumonia, during the influenza season

2. Within 48 hours of illness onset for the following patients at higher risk of severe influenza:

- adults aged 65 years or older
- pregnant women
- people with the following conditions:
 - heart disease
 - Down syndrome
 - obesity (body mass index [BMI] 30 kg/m² or more)
 - chronic respiratory conditions
 - severe neurological conditions
 - immune compromise
 - other chronic illnesses
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of any age
- residents of aged-care facilities or long-term residential facilities
- homeless people.

3. To prevent disease transmission to contacts in the hospital setting, preferably on the advice of an infection control or infectious diseases team.