

**You have been prescribed antiviral therapy for the flu. You will probably be sick for several days with fever and respiratory symptoms.**

**Take Medications as Prescribed:**

- Take all of the antiviral medication as directed. Do not delay taking the medication. It has been shown to reduce the severity of infection, but only if given within the first day or two of symptoms.
- Continue to cover your cough and wash your hands often, even when taking antiviral medications, to prevent spreading influenza to others.
- Call the office if you (or your child) experience any side effects; i.e. nausea, vomiting, rash, or unusual behavior.
- Take medications for symptom relief as needed for fever and pain such as acetaminophen (Tylenol®) and ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®, Nuprin®), and cough medicine. These medicines do not need to be taken regularly if your symptoms improve.
- Do **not** give aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid) or products that contain aspirin (e.g. bismuth subsalicylate – Pepto Bismol) to children or teenagers 18 years old or younger.
- Children younger than 4 years of age should not be given over-the-counter cold medications without first speaking with a health care provider.

**Seek Emergency Care**

If your child experiences any of the following:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish or gray skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough

In adults, emergency warning signs that need urgent medical attention include:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough

**Follow These Home Care Recommendations:**

- Stay home except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of fever-reducing medicine.)
- Keep away from others as much as possible. This is to keep from making others sick.
- Drink clear fluids (such as water, broth, sports drinks, electrolyte beverages for infants) to keep from being dehydrated.
- Dishes can be done in dishwasher or with hot soapy water.
- Throw away tissues and other disposable items used by the sick person in the trash. Wash your hands after touching used tissues and similar waste.
- Have everyone in the household wash hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.

For more detailed information about Influenza home care, visit [cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov) or call 1-800-CDC-INFO

**Drug Specific Information:**

**Zanamivir (Relenza):** Not recommended for those with underlying lung disease such as asthma or in children less than age 7 for treatment or less than age 5 for prevention (prophylaxis in contacts at risk). Nausea, diarrhea, dizziness, or headache may occur. Because this medication is an inhaled powder, you may experience increased cough after using this medication. If cough or any of these other effects persist or worsen, notify us or your pharmacist promptly.

Remember that we have prescribed this medication because we have judged that the benefit to you is greater than the risk of side effects. Many people using this medication do not have serious side effects.

This medication can cause breathing problems (e.g., bronchospasm), which in rare cases can be fatal. If you experience breathing problems such as wheezing or shortness of breath, stop using zanamivir and contact your doctor immediately. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for details.

The flu itself or zanamivir may rarely cause serious mental/mood changes. This may be more likely in children. Tell us immediately of any signs of unusual behavior including confusion, agitation, self-injury.

A very serious allergic reaction to this drug is unlikely, but seek immediate medical attention if it occurs. Symptoms of a serious allergic reaction may include: rash, itching/swelling (especially of the face/tongue/throat), severe dizziness, trouble breathing.

**Oseltamivir (Tamiflu):** Nausea and vomiting may occur as your body adjusts to this medication and usually go away after 1-2 days. Dizziness may also occur. If any of these effects persist or worsen, notify us or your pharmacist promptly.

Remember that we have prescribed this medication because we have judged that the benefit to you is greater than the risk of side effects. Many people using this medication do not have serious side effects.

The flu itself or oseltamivir may rarely cause serious mental/mood changes. This may be more likely in children. Tell us immediately of any signs of unusual behavior including confusion, agitation, self-injury.

Seek immediate medical attention if this rare but very serious side effect occurs: chest pain.

A very serious allergic reaction to this drug is unlikely, but seek immediate medical attention if it occurs. Symptoms of a serious allergic reaction may include: rash, itching/swelling (especially of the face/tongue/throat), severe dizziness, trouble breathing.