

From the Chief Medical Officer
Dr Michael McBride



Department of
**Health, Social Services
and Public Safety**

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AN ROINN

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HSS(MD) 57/2009

To: Chief Executives, Public Health Agency/ Health & Social Care Board/Trusts
Director of Public Health, Public Health Agency
Assistant Director Health Protection, Public Health Agency
Director of Nursing, Public Health Agency
Directors of Pharmaceutical Services, Health & Social Care Board/Trusts
Family Practitioner Service Leads, Health & Social Care Board
GP Medical Advisers, Health & Social Care Board
All General Practitioners (*for onward distribution to practice staff*)
Consultants in Communicable Disease Control, Public Health Agency
All Community Pharmacists
Medical Directors, HSS Trusts (*for onward distribution to all Consultants, Occupational Health Physicians*)
Nursing Directors, HSS Trusts (*for onward distribution to all Community Nurses*)
GP Out of Hours Centres (*for urgent attention of all staff*)
Regional Pharmaceutical Procurement Service
Regional Medicines Information Service

Your Ref:

Our Ref: HSS(MD) 57/2009

Date: 24 November 2009

Dear Colleague

Dosage of oseltamivir in children under 6 months of age in the swine flu pandemic

As indicated in our letter of 28 September 2009 (HSS(MD) 40/2009) we are now in a position to inform you about changes to the dose of oseltamivir in children under 6 months of age during an influenza pandemic outbreak and the steps that need to be taken to ensure a safe transition to the new dosage.

Treatment of Children aged under 6 months of age

The manufacturer of Tamiflu (oseltamivir), Roche Products Ltd, has been granted a variation to the Market Authorisation for the treatment of children under 6 months of age.

The recommended dose for the **treatment** of newborn children up to 1 month of age remains as:

2 mg per kg body weight given twice a day for 5 days.

The recommended dose for the **treatment** of children over 1 month and up to 3 months of age is:

2.5 mg per kg body weight given twice a day for 5 days.

The recommended dose for the **treatment** of children over 3 months of age and under 6 months of age, is now the same as the recommended dose for those aged 6 months and over and under 1 year of age:

3 mg per kg body weight given twice a day for 5 days.

The liquid formulation of oseltamivir in the Northern Ireland stockpile is Oseltamivir Oral Solution. This has a strength of 15mg in 1ml and is manufactured by a designated licensed hospital pharmacy manufacturing unit. It is the product that should be routinely used for the treatment of swine flu in children under 1 year. Set out in the tables, included at **Annex One**, is new dosage guidance based on the 15mg in 1ml Oseltamivir Oral Solution.

Managing the transition

General Practitioners and healthcare professionals authorising the supply of oseltamivir for children aged under 6 months of age will need to ensure extra care is taken as this change of dosage is implemented. The implementation should be overseen and supervised by Heads of Pharmacy and Medicines Management in HSC Trusts and the HSC Board working closely with Consultants in Public Health.

We are not expecting any further changes to the dose of oseltamivir in the near future but will keep you updated if there are any changes.

Prophylaxis

In certain situations, where individuals with a serious underlying condition have been in close contact with an infectious case, clinical judgement may be used to offer a course of prophylaxis. **The doses for prophylaxis are shown in the tables in Annex One.**

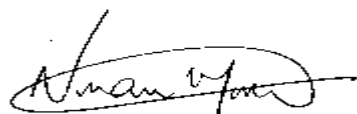
The dose recommendations were based on limited evidence to support the use of oseltamivir for the prevention of influenza for children under the age of one year. Doctors should consider very carefully the benefits and risks of prophylactic antiviral medicine for each child under the age of one, and may wish to take advice from a specialist in the care of young children.

We hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely



DR MICHAEL MCBRIDE
CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER



DR NORMAN MORROW
CHIEF PHARMACEUTICAL OFFICER

This letter is available at www.dhsspsni.gov.uk and also on the DHSSPS Extranet which can be accessed directly at <http://extranet.dhsspsni.gov.uk> or by going through the HPSS Web at <http://www.n-i.nhs.uk> and clicking on DHSSPS.

ANNEX ONE

Dosage chart for newborn up to 1 month

TREATMENT: 2mg/kg given twice a day for 5 days		
PROPHYLAXIS 2mg/kg given once a day for 10 days		
OSELTAMIVIR solution - 15mg in 1 ml		
Dose calculation based on weight and dose of 2 mg/kg		
Weight range in kg	Dose to be given in ml	Quantity to be supplied
2.0 – 2.6	0.3	1 x 20 ml
2.7 – 3.3	0.4	1 x 20 ml
3.4 – 4.0	0.5	1 x 20 ml
4.1 – 4.8	0.6	1 x 20 ml
4.9 – 5.5	0.7	1 x 20 ml

Doses have been rounded off to 0.1 ml increments to make it easier for parents to administer the medicine.

Dosage chart for children over 1 month and up to 3 months of age

TREATMENT: 2.5mg/kg given twice a day for 5 days		
PROPHYLAXIS 2.5mg/kg given once a day for 10 days		
OSELTAMIVIR solution - 15mg in 1 ml		
Dose calculation based on weight and dose of 2.5 mg/kg		
Weight range in kg	Dose to be given in ml	Quantity to be supplied
3.0 – 3.5	0.5	1 x 20 ml
3.6 – 4.1	0.6	1 x 20 ml
4.2 – 4.7	0.7	1 x 20 ml
4.8 – 5.3	0.8	1 x 20 ml
5.4 – 5.9	0.9	1 x 20 ml
6.0 – 6.5	1.0	1 x 20 ml
6.6 – 7.1	1.1	1 x 20 ml
7.2 – 7.7	1.2	1 x 20 ml

Doses have been rounded off to 0.1 ml increments to make it easier for parents to administer the medicine.

Dosage chart for children over 3 months and under 1 year of age

TREATMENT: 3mg/kg given twice a day for 5 days		
PROPHYLAXIS 3mg/kg given once a day for 10 days		
OSELTAMIVIR solution - 15mg in 1 ml		
Dose calculation based on weight and dose of 3 mg/kg		
Weight range in kg	Dose to be given in ml	Quantity to be supplied
4.5 – 4.9	0.9	1 x 20 ml
5.0 – 5.4	1.0	1 x 20 ml
5.5 – 5.9	1.1	1 x 20 ml
6.0 – 6.4	1.2	1 x 20 ml
6.5 – 6.9	1.3	1 x 20 ml
7.0 – 7.4	1.4	1 x 20 ml
7.5 – 7.9	1.5	1 x 20 ml
8.0 – 8.4	1.6	1 x 20 ml
8.5 – 8.9	1.7	1 x 20 ml
9.0 – 9.4	1.8	1 x 20 ml
9.5 – 9.9	1.9	2 x 20 ml
10.0 - 10.4	2.0	2 x 20 ml
10.5 - 10.9	2.1	2 x 20 ml
11.0 – 11.4	2.2	2 x 20 ml
11.5 – 11.9	2.3	2 x 20 ml
12.0 – 12.4	2.4	2 x 20 ml

Doses have been rounded off to 0.1 ml increments to make it easier for parents too administer the medicine.