

Before taking Oseltamivir (*Tamiflu*), is there anything I should let the doctor know?

Please remember to inform the doctor before taking
this antiviral:

- If you are taking any other medication including those you may have bought without a prescription. Oseltamivir can be taken with paracetamol, ibuprofen or acetylsalicylic acid (Aspirin)
- If you have any drug allergies.
- If you have any kidney problem.
- If you are pregnant or breast-feeding.



OSELTAMIVIR (TAMIFLU)

for the prevention of avian
influenza



What is OSELTAMIVIR (TAMIFLU)?

The antiviral you have been advised to take is called Oseltamivir (*Tamiflu*). It comes as a tablet. It is a well-known antiviral medicine used to prevent or treat influenza ("the flu"). It has been used successfully in many countries for several years.

Why have I been advised to take it?

You have been in close contact with birds suspected to be infected with the avian influenza ("bird flu") virus. As a result, there is a very small risk that you may become infected with this virus. People infected with avian influenza ("bird flu") virus can become seriously ill.

What is the benefit of taking this medication?

The risk of becoming infected with avian influenza ("bird flu") virus is very small. But if you take Oseltamivir (*Tamiflu*) it can prevent the virus from spreading inside your body. If you become infected with the virus, this antiviral medicine may prevent you from becoming ill or may reduce the severity of the illness that follows.

What is the risk of taking this medication?

Most people who take Oseltamivir (*Tamiflu*) do not experience any difficulties with it. But like most medications, Oseltamivir (*Tamiflu*) can have possible side effects. Nausea, vomiting and stomach pains are the most common complaints. If these side effects occur, they mostly occur after the first dose and will usually improve over time. Diarrhoea, bronchitis,

dizziness, tiredness, headache and sleeping difficulties are less common side effects. Side effects are like the symptoms of influenza ("the flu"). So it is very important that you contact your doctor if you develop any of these symptoms while taking Oseltamivir (*Tamiflu*).

Will Oseltamivir (*Tamiflu*) remove the possibility of becoming ill?

If you were to become infected with avian influenza ("bird flu") virus, taking antiviral medicine should reduce the possibility of becoming ill. But it will not completely remove the possibility, and so you should be on your guard and contact your doctor if you feel unwell in any way.

How should I take the antiviral medicine?

You will be given one tablet to take each day while you are in contact with infected birds, and one tablet to take each day for a further 10 days. It is important that you take the tablets as directed.

- The tablets should be swallowed whole with a full glass of water. You should not break or chew the tablets
- It is best to take the tablet in the morning with your breakfast.
- If you forget to a tablet, take it as soon as you remember. Do not take a double dose.

These antiviral medicines work to protect you against becoming ill. It is very important that you continue to take the tablets until the course is finished, even if you feel well.