

Who Should Receive Antiviral Treatment for Novel H1N1 Influenza?

According to new guidance from the CDC on September 8, 2009, individuals who have suspected novel H1N1 influenza (flu) symptoms do not require treatment with antiviral drugs unless they are at high risk for influenza complications.

Antiviral treatment is recommended for:

- All hospitalized patients with confirmed, probable, or suspected novel H1N1 influenza
- Patients who are at higher risk for seasonal influenza complications and are experiencing flu symptoms. High risk populations include the following:
 - Children younger than 5 years old. The risk for severe complications from seasonal influenza is highest among children younger than 2 years old.
 - Adults 65 years of age and older.
 - Persons with the following conditions:
 - Pregnancy • Cancer • Blood disorders (including sickle cell disease) • Chronic lung disease [including asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)] • Diabetes • Heart disease • Kidney disorders • Liver disorders • Neurological disorders (including nervous system, brain or spinal cord) • Neuromuscular disorders (including muscular dystrophy and multiple sclerosis) • People with weakened immune systems (including people with AIDS)
 - Persons younger than 19 years of age who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy.
 - Residents of nursing homes and other chronic-care facilities.

Information adapted from www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/recommendations.htm on 08/31/2009