

H1N1 Influenza 09 (Human Swine Flu)

Health Professionals alert - SUSTAIN

7pm, 10 June 2009

This notice is provided to Health Professionals as the latest update on the situation regarding the influenza strain H1N1 Influenza 09 (Human Swine Flu).

Victoria is currently in a modified sustain phase of pandemic plan.

The Victorian public are still being asked to contact their local GP as a first port of call if they have influenza like illness.

The public are being asked to **only** present to their local hospital if they are seriously ill.

Current case definition

Children and Adolescents > 12 months old – 18 years

Acute onset of illness with a measured temperature of $\geq 38.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ or significant history of fever (rigors, sweating chills) plus two or more of cough, sore throat, body aches, fatigue/tiredness or shortness of breath.

Adults (over 18 years) as above except a measured temperature of 38°C may be used.

Or Laboratory confirmed Influenza A

It is important to check the DHS Human Swine Flu website regularly as the case definition may change over time www.health.vic.gov.au

Process for treating a patient during the 'modified sustain' phase

1 Patient presents with influenza like illness.

Does your patient meet the current clinical case definition above?

No – treat on clinical merit

Yes – If the patient is presenting within 48hours of symptom onset, treat with Tamiflu. If the symptom onset is over 48hours Tamiflu is not appropriate.

Please ask your patient for the details of their direct household contacts and write a script or letter for a community pharmacist to dispense the prophylactic doses of Tamiflu

2. Who should be tested?

Testing is **highly** recommended for:

- Symptomatic patients with severe clinical disease (i.e. hospitalised)
- Symptomatic students or staff who attend a special development school, those <12months and attend a childcare centre or residents in a residential aged care facility
- Symptomatic HCW's who have managed high risk patients during their infectious period.

High risk patients can be categorised as: pregnant women, the immuno-suppressed, those with chronic cardio-pulmonary disease, metabolic disease such as diabetes, or morbid obesity

Acute care facilities should follow their standard operating procedures to prevent nosocomial spread of the virus.

3. What is the procedure for testing?

Take nose and throat swabs combined in a single vial of viral transport medium (VTM), or place in several mls of sterile saline if VTM is not available. If VTM is not available a dry swab is suitable.

The swab can be sent through your normal pathology services for influenza testing. If it is positive for Influenza A, the sample should be referred to VIDRL for sub typing. The sample should be clearly marked "**H1N1 VIDRL Testing**". You should also ring VIDRL (medical staff) on 9342 2600 to advise that you are sending a specimen for testing.

4 Where can patients access antivirals?

Tamiflu for patients who meet the case definition above can have this dispensed with a prescription (by either a General Practitioner or Division 1 Nurse) from the state supply (free) from a community pharmacy. The script must state the dosage requirements.

Prophylactic doses of Tamiflu can be dispensed by the pharmacy to household contacts upon written advice from a doctor or Division 1 nurse. Household contacts must present in person

- Special consideration should be taken for the use of Tamiflu on children <12 months old for prophylaxis. It is recommended that treating health professionals should discuss any proposed use with DHS or a specialist paediatric infectious disease physician.

Stocks of Tamiflu have been sent to a range of community pharmacies to date and over the coming days more pharmacists across the state will be also receive stocks.

Travel medicine **IS NOT** included through the state supply. If you wish to provide a script for this purpose, please ensure that "for travel purposes" is clearly indicated on the script. Patients will be required to pay for this course/s as per normal arrangements.

Hospitals have also been provided with supplies for inpatient needs.

List of Community Pharmacies

Contact your local Division of General Practice or the Pharmacy Guild for a list of community pharmacies.

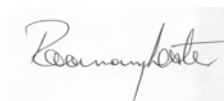
Isolation/Quarantine

If the patient is started on Tamiflu, please advise them to stay in voluntary home quarantine for **three days** from the start of treatment. Household contacts do not need to be quarantined

If the patient is not started on Tamiflu please advise the patient to stay in voluntary home quarantine for **seven days** from the onset of symptoms.

Quarantine of household contacts is not required.

Yours sincerely



Dr Rosemary Lester
Acting Chief Health Officer