



OCT. 28, 2005

HEALTH ADVISORY

TO: Health-care Providers
FROM: Kirby Kruger, State Epidemiologist
RE: Oseltamivir Stockpiling
DATE: October 27, 2005

The H5N1 influenza (avian flu) virus has been receiving considerable media attention over the last couple of weeks, and oseltamivir (Tamiflu) has been touted as the drug of choice against the H5N1 virus. Anecdotal reports indicate patients are seeking prescriptions for oseltamivir to have on hand in the event of an outbreak or pandemic.

With limited supplies of oseltamivir available in the United States, the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) is recommending that health-care providers do not provide prescriptions to patients in order to “stockpile” this medication in the event of an avian influenza outbreak.

The highest priority use of oseltamivir is for treatment of those infected with influenza, followed by its use for the prophylaxis of individuals who are at risk for complications from influenza and persons who care for high-risk individuals. Other prophylaxis recommendations include persons who have immune deficiencies, controlling institutional outbreaks and persons at high risk who could not be vaccinated.

Patients who want to reduce their risk of getting influenza this season should be vaccinated against influenza.

Additional information regarding antiviral use and avian influenza can be found on the CDC’s websites www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5408a1.htm and www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/index.htm. For further information, please call the NDDoH at 800.472.2180 or visit the health department website at www.ndflu.com.

Categories of Health Alert messages:

- *Health Alert conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.*
- *Health Advisory provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.*
- *Health Update provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; no immediate action necessary.*
- *Health Information provides general information that is not necessarily considered to be of an emergent nature.*

This message is being sent to local public health units, clinics, hospitals, physicians, tribal health, North Dakota Nurses Association, North Dakota Long Term Care Association, North Dakota Healthcare Association, North Dakota Medical Association, North Dakota EMS Association, and hospital public information officers.