

Oseltamivir (Tamiflu®)

When should I give oseltamivir?

For the treatment of flu, it is usually given twice daily, once in the morning and once in the evening. Ideally, these times should be 10-12 hours apart, for example, 8am and 8pm.

Give the medicine at about the same times each day so that this becomes part of your child's daily routine, which will help you to remember.

If you forgot to give the medicine, you should give it as soon as you remember within 4 hours. However, if the time is near to next dose, do NOT give the missed dose. Wait until it is time to give the next normal dose. Never give a 'double' dose of Tamiflu.

How should I give it?

Capsules should be swallowed whole with a glass of water, milk or juice. Your child should not chew the capsules. You can open the capsule and mix the contents with a small amount of soft food such as yogurt, honey or jam. Make sure your child swallows it straight away, without chewing.

Liquid suspension should be shaken well before giving it to your child. Measure out the right amount using a medicine spoon or oral syringe. Do not use a teaspoon as it will not give the right amount.

When should the medicine start working?

If you are giving oseltamivir to your child to treat flu, he or she should begin to feel better after 2-3 days. You should continue to give the medicine for as long as your doctor has told you so, even when your child starts to feel better.

Are there any possible side-effects?

We use medicines to make our children better, but sometimes they have other effects that we don't want (side-effects).

Common side-effects you need to know about

- ✧ Your child may feel sick or vomit, which usually happen in the first two days of treatment. They may also have stomach pains or diarrhoea. It may help to give each dose of oseltamivir with some food or milk;
- ✧ Your child may get headaches.

These side-effects should get better after a few days. If they are still a problem after a week, contact your doctor for advice.

Rare side-effects you must do something about

If your child has any of the following, contact your doctor straight away or take your child to hospital:

- ✧ *irregular heart beat or fast heart beats (your child may say that their heart is racing or feels fluttery);*
- ✧ *yellowing of the skin or whites of eyes (jaundice);*
- ✧ *problems with vision, or painful red eyes;*
- ✧ *fever (temperature above 38°C) and rash or mouth ulcers;*
- ✧ *muddled or disorientated (confusion)*;*
- ✧ *behavioural changes (neuropsychiatric events)*.*

*Although these were reported as side effects of Tamiflu, children and teenagers who have flu are at higher risks for developing seizures, confusion or abnormal behavior during their early course of illness, without the use of Tamiflu.

There may, sometimes, be other side-effects that are not listed above. If you notice anything unusual and are concerned, contact your doctor or pharmacist.

Is there anything else I need to know about oseltamivir?

Capsules can be store at room temperature.

The liquid suspension should not be kept at room temperature (not over 25°C) for longer than 10 days or in the fridge (2-8°C) for longer than 17 days after the bottle has been opened.

References:

1. Medicines for Children: information for parents and carers- Oseltamivir for influenza (flu). Version 2, June 2014. NPPG, RCPCH and Wellchild 2011, UK.
www.medicinesforchildren.org.uk
2. Summary of Product Characteristics. Tamiflu 6mg/ml Powder for Oral Suspension; Tamiflu 30mg, 40mg and 75mg capsules (Roche). Last updated: 5 May 2015.