Antiviral Treatment Timeline

Antiviral drugs are important tools to help treat COVID-19 and flu that can help lessen symptoms and lower the risk of hospitalization—especially for people at higher risk for serious illness. **Antivirals are prescription-only treatments that must be given early in illness, after the first symptoms begin.**

Flu and COVID-19 are both contagious respiratory illnesses, but they are caused by different viruses. You cannot tell the difference between flu and COVID-19 by the symptoms alone because they have some of the same signs and symptoms. Specific testing is needed to tell what the illness is and to confirm a diagnosis. **Getting treated early for COVID-19 and flu can reduce your risk of getting very sick.**

FLU ANTIVIRALS

Flu antiviral treatments are available for people who are at higher risk of serious illness from flu. These treatments help lessen the severity of symptoms and shorten the time you are sick. Treatments such as Oseltamivir, Peramivir, and Zanamivir need to be started quickly, within 2 days after the first symptoms appear.

ANTIVIRAL TREATMENTS FOR FLU

› **Should begin within 2 days after symptoms appear.**

DAY 1	› **Symptoms Begin:** At the first sign of any symptoms like fever, cough or trouble breathing, contact a healthcare provider to talk about treatment.
DAY 1–2	› There is a short window of time to start an antiviral treatment for flu. **Oseltamivir (individuals at least 14 days old):** Oral medication that needs to taken within 48 hours after symptoms begin. **Zanamivir (individuals 7 years and older):** Comes in an inhaler and needs to be taken within 48 hours after symptoms begin. **Peramivir (individuals 6 months and older):** Single-dose IV treatment, given in a medical setting, that must be given within 48 hours after symptoms begin. **Baloxavir Marboxil (children aged 5–12 without chronic conditions and all people aged 12 and older):** Oral medication that needs to be taken within 48 hours after symptoms begin.
DAY 3+	› Treatment for flu can still help lessen symptoms and prevent more serious illness, particularly in people at high-risk.

Sources: cdc.gov/flu/treatment/index.html, cdc.gov/flu/symptoms/flu-vs-covid19.htm

For more information about symptoms and risks visit:
cveep.org/respiratory

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