

Influenza outbreak control in long-term care facilities

Before a flu outbreak occurs

- **Vaccinate** all residents and staff
- **Prepare** for outbreaks
 - Get pre-approved tamiflu orders from physicians
 - Monitor residents and staff for flu-like symptoms
 - Have flu testing procedures in place
 - Promote handwashing and covering coughs

Is a flu outbreak occurring?

- 2 or more residents ill with influenza-like illness (ILI) = notify your local health department
- **ILI = fever + (cough or sore throat)**
 - Note: the elderly may have atypical flu symptoms

When a flu outbreak occurs

- **Test** ill residents (PCR tests are best!)
- **Monitor** residents and staff daily for ILI symptoms
- **Standard and droplet precautions**
 - Gloves, gowns, and facemasks
 - Frequent handwashing even if wearing gloves
- **Implement control measures**
 - Cohort ill residents, stop group activities
 - Ill staff restricted until asymptomatic for 24 hours
 - Restrict visitors, promote handwashing

Treatment

- All long-term care facility residents who have confirmed or suspected influenza should receive antiviral treatment (typically Tamiflu[®]) immediately
- Do not wait for lab confirmation of each individual to treat, begin within 2 days of symptom onset
- Tamiflu[®] Dose: typically 75 mg twice daily, 5 days

Prophylaxis

- Administer prophylaxis to all residents when ≥ 2 ill within 72 hours AND at least one resident is lab-confirmed
- Consider offering prophylaxis to unvaccinated staff
- Tamiflu[®] Dose: typically 75 mg once daily, 2 weeks

Influenza Outbreak Control Measures Summary

Hand Hygiene

- Post "Cover Your Cough" posters
- Provide information about benefits of hand hygiene
- Ensure access to sinks, soap, and warm water and alcohol-based hand sanitizer

Residents

- Cohort residents – have ill residents stay in their own rooms and have meals served in-room
- Limit large group activities in the facility
- Avoid new admissions or transfers to wards with symptomatic residents

Staff

- Cohort personnel – restrict personnel movement from areas of the facility having illness to areas not affected by the outbreak
- Monitor and exclude ill personnel with influenza-like symptoms until at least 24 hours after they no longer have a fever
- Implement standard and droplet precautions (gloves, gowns, facemask)

Visitors

- Limit visitation and exclude ill persons from visiting the facility via posted notices
- Consider restricting visitation by children during community outbreaks of influenza

Vaccination

- Administer the current season's influenza vaccine to unvaccinated residents and health care personnel as per current vaccination recommendations