



# FIGHTING INFLUENZA STARTS WITH YOU

**Symptoms of influenza:** fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose, headache, achy muscles and joints. Influenza can also make an underlying chronic condition worse, or lead to lung infection (pneumonia).

## THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE TO TEST FOR INFLUENZA

**Rapid influenza A&B antigen test**

**Tests for proteins of the virus**

**Influenza A&B/COVID-19/RSV PCR test**

**Tests for the genetic material of the virus**

NOTE: Influenza A/B rapid tests are less sensitive compared to PCR tests. A negative rapid test result does not exclude influenza. Antiviral treatment for patients at high risk for severe influenza should NOT be withheld based on a negative influenza rapid test result.

### The following groups of people are more likely to get very sick from the influenza:

- Pregnant women up to 6 weeks post-partum
- Persons infected with HIV
- Persons infected with tuberculosis
- Persons of any age with underlying chronic diseases e.g. cardiac and pulmonary diseases, diabetes mellitus or on immunosuppressive medication
- Persons over 65 years of age
- Persons below 18 years of age receiving chronic aspirin therapy
- Morbidly obese persons (BMI >40)
- Young children (particularly under 2 years of age)

Persons that are in the above risk groups need treatment with oseltamivir (Tamiflu) as soon as possible (ideally within 48 hours of symptoms starting).

Oseltamivir treatment should be given based on symptoms and signs of influenza and NOT be delayed pending laboratory confirmation of influenza.

### To prevent others from getting influenza if you have been infected:

- Stay at home until symptoms have resolved (at least 24 hours after fever has gone away)
- Avoid close contact with others
- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Wear a tight-fitting mask especially in public places
- Wash hands with soap and water or disinfect with an alcohol-based hand rub regularly
- Wipe down surfaces that are frequently touched or shared

For more comprehensive information visit  
The National Institute for Communicable Diseases website:  
[www.nicd.ac.za](http://www.nicd.ac.za).

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