

Compare Xofluza to Tamiflu for Treating the Flu

***Xofluza* (zoh-FLOO-zuh, baloxavir) will be the first new oral antiviral for treating influenza in nearly 20 years.**

Think of *Xofluza* as an alternative to oseltamivir (*Tamiflu*).

A big difference is *Xofluza* is ONE oral dose...compared to 5 days of BID oseltamivir. *Xofluza* also seems to cause less nausea and vomiting.

Xofluza has a new antiviral mechanism. But either *Xofluza* or oseltamivir only reduces flu symptoms by about a day in otherwise healthy patients...if started within 48 hours of onset.

Plus there's limited or no evidence for *Xofluza* in the high-risk patients who benefit most from antivirals...such as those under age 2 or 65 and older, with chronic conditions (asthma, etc), or pregnant women.

And some experts are concerned about early suggestions of *Xofluza* resistance. It's too soon to say how this will pan out clinically.

Xofluza will cost about \$150...versus about \$100 for 5 days of generic oseltamivir. Point out that some payers may not cover *Xofluza*.

For now, recommend sticking with oseltamivir to treat flu in high-risk or severely ill patients...and starting ASAP after symptom onset.

Don't feel compelled to recommend any antiviral for most otherwise healthy patients. Instead suggest rest, fluids, analgesics, etc.

But if these patients insist, it's okay to consider *Xofluza* instead of oseltamivir in those 12 and older...IF they can start within 48 hours.

Advise not to take *Xofluza* at the same time as dairy or products with calcium, aluminum, iron, etc...these may impair *Xofluza*'s absorption.

Don't recommend combining antivirals...or using another antiviral if the first doesn't help. There's no evidence to support this.

Continue to emphasize flu vaccination to help PREVENT the flu.

Suggest oseltamivir if high-risk patients need an antiviral for prophylaxis. So far, *Xofluza* is only for TREATING flu.

Use our chart, *Antivirals for Influenza*, for *Xofluza* dosing...and to see how the *Relenza* (zanamivir) inhaler compares.

Key References:

-N Engl J Med 2018;379(10):913-23

-N Engl J Med 2018;379(10):975-7

-Lancet 2015;385(9979):1729-37

-Medication pricing by Elsevier, accessed Nov 2018

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