



RMHMA Newsletter

3rd Quarter, 2004

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>Antiviral Drugs and the Flu</i>	1, 2
<i>25th Annual Training and Education Conference</i>	1
<i>Dangers of Sodium Azide</i>	1, 3
<i>Board of Directors</i>	2, 3
<i>Peak Months for Flu Activity</i>	2

25th Annual Training & Education Conference

The 25th Annual Training and Education Conference is going to be in Grand Junction, Colorado April 25-29, 2005. This is going to be a very special Conference!

Some of the topics that we are considering are: Ops Class, WMD Classes, Hazard Classification, EMS HazMat, Street Chem, UP Railroad Training, DOJ Courses, Cameo, ICS & NIMS and much more.

The hotel will most likely be the Grand Vista Hotel, 2790 Crossroads Blvd. 1-800-800-7796.

Please forward any ideas or questions concerning this Conference, please call us at: 1-303-474-4000

E-Mail us at:
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Antiviral Drugs and the Flu, Alternatives to the Flu Shot

Center for Disease Control, October 22, 2004

Three antiviral drugs (amantadine, rimantadine, and oseltamivir) are approved and commercially available for use in **preventing** flu. All of these medications are prescription drugs, and a doctor should be consulted before the drugs are used. When used for prevention, they are about 70% to 90% effective for preventing illness in healthy adults.

Four antiviral drugs (amantadine, rimantadine, zanamavir and oseltamivir) have been approved for **treatment** of the flu. If taken within 2 days of getting sick, these drugs can reduce the symptoms of the flu and shorten the time you are sick by 1 or 2 days. They also can make you less contagious to others. All of these drugs must be prescribed by a doctor and taken for 5 days. Antiviral drugs are effective only against influenza viruses. They will not help the symptoms associated with the common cold or many other flu-like illnesses caused by viruses that circulate in the winter.

All of the antiviral drugs are different in terms of who can take them, how they are given, any dosing changes based on age or medical conditions, and side effects.

Your doctors will help decide whether you should get antivirals and which one you should get.

Use of Antivirals

Antiviral drugs are most often used to control flu outbreaks in institutions, for example in nursing homes, or in hospital wards, where people at high risk (see below) for complications from flu are in close contact with each other. Antivirals also have been used on cruise ships or similar settings to control outbreaks of the flu.

In the event of an outbreak, public health practice is to combine the use of flu vaccine and antivirals. In a nursing home during an outbreak, for example, residents and staff are given the flu vaccine and antivirals to prevent flu until the vaccine takes effect (about 2 weeks). This practice continues as long as influenza is occurring in that setting.

Doctors also can prescribe antivirals for flu to people not living in institutional settings, but treatment must begin within 2 days of the onset of symptoms for it to be effective. Also, while all antivirals lessen the symptoms of illness and shorten the duration of illness, only 1 (oseltamivir) has been shown in a study to reduce some complications requiring antibiotics.

When considering antivirals, it's important to remember that most healthy people recover from the flu without complications.

...Continued on page 2

Sodium azide as potential terrorist tool...

All new cars are equipped with airbags, which are deployed by an igniter triggered by a sensor when the vehicle stops suddenly at a speed greater than 10-16 MPH. The chemical which creates the nitrogen to inflate the bag is called Sodium Azide, and is a very good rocket fuel. It is also extremely toxic and can kill in very small amounts. When the airbag is deployed, the only byproduct is nitrogen, which is a significant component of our natural air, and the sodium azide is thus rendered completely harmless. When an airbag-equipped vehicle is scrapped, though, and the airbag has not been deployed, the sodium azide becomes a ticking time bomb in that it is still highly toxic and, more importantly, scrapyard workers...

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Who Should Get Antiviral Drugs

People who are at high risk of serious complications from influenza may benefit most from anti-viral medications. This includes: people 65 years of age and older, children 6-23 months of age, people with chronic medical conditions (for example, heart or lung disease, diabetes) and pregnant women. (Note that none of the antivirals are approved for use in children less than 1 year of age.) While CDC has provided interim guidance for health-care professionals on the use of antiviral drugs this season, your doctor will decide whether you should get antiviral drugs this season.

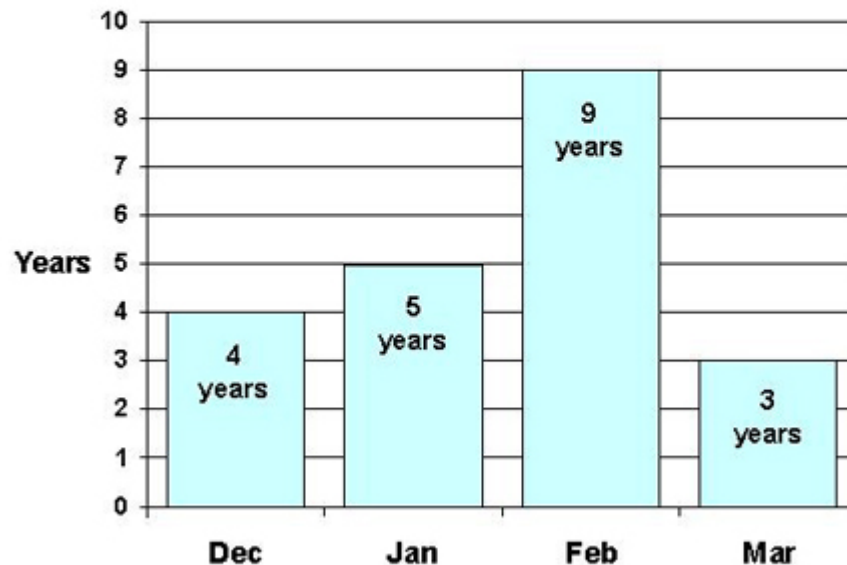
For Treatment: If you get sick with flu-like symptoms this season, your doctor first may give you a test to find out whether you have influenza. (Symptoms of flu include: fever (usually high), headache, tiredness, a sore throat and dry cough, nasal congestion, and body aches.) Your doctor also will consider a number of things before making a treatment decision, such as your risk for complications from flu.

For Prevention: In the event of a flu outbreak in a home, institution, or community, your doctor may choose to give antivirals to you as a preventive measure, especially if you are at high risk for complications from the flu. Also, if you are in close contact with someone who is considered at high risk for complications from flu, you may be given antiviral drugs to prevent passing flu to the high-risk person.

For more information, see the following at www.cdc.gov:

- [Antiviral Drugs: Summary of Side Effects](#)
- [Background Information for Clinicians: Antiviral Agents for Influenza](#)

Peak Months for Flu Activity Over the past 21 years



The Myth of the "Stomach Flu"

Many people use the term "stomach flu" to describe illnesses with nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea. These symptoms can be caused by many different viruses, bacteria, or even parasites. While vomiting, diarrhea, and being nauseous or "sick to your stomach" can sometimes be related to the flu – particularly in children – these problems are rarely the main symptoms of influenza. The flu is a respiratory disease and not a stomach or intestinal disease.

Dangers of Sodium Azide, continued...

Should the vehicle be crushed and the sodium azide (NaN_3) be released from its container, the crushing machinery, the vehicle parts and the very air around the scrap yard will have the potential to kill. Should it come into contact with lead or copper it could easily explode, and make the vehicle and its crusher attempt to launch itself into space. Should the sodium azide become damp, it could easily seep into the water supply, thus accomplishing the wholesale poisoning of everyone who drinks water.

Some scrap yards remove the canisters from the vehicle prior to crushing and store them on shelves, where they are available for sale to those needing to replace their airbags at a lower cost than a new one, or to demented individuals seeking a method to commit terrorism by poisoning large numbers of innocent victims. There are tons of this stuff stored in this manner throughout the nation. So what's wrong with that?

First of all, the possession of this product is totally and completely unregulated, so we have no way of determining who has it and where it is. We have no way of knowing if it is being safely stored, or if it is in danger of exploding at any moment. Secondly, there are rumors that various terrorist groups have already figured this out. Anyone can go to any scrap yard, buy up airbag canisters, open them in a safe environment, then load the poison in a plastic bag, leave it in a public place and remotely ignite it, causing hundreds of deaths at a time.

Anyone can freely buy and use hundreds of pounds of the stuff without anyone keeping track. They can even accumulate tons of it without anyone even noticing.

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The Rocky Mountain Hazardous Materials Association (RMHMA) draws upon the experience and expertise available from the public, industry, emergency response and regulatory agencies involved in the manufacturing, storage, transportation, disposal and public safety activities associated with hazardous materials. The RMHMA is committed to providing opportunities for these groups and individuals to exchange information and share experiences in an open and amiable form for the benefit of all.

For more information about the RMHMA and how to become a member, look us up on the web at

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Send articles and ads to:

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The RMHMA Newsletter is offering a classified ad section for those who want to sell, buy, or request services, equipment, supplies, etc. Ad rates are for the text only. Ads are \$4.00 per line (containing 50 characters).

Ad Rates Per Issue:

<u>RMHMA</u>	<u>Member</u>	<u>Non-Member</u>
Business Cards	\$20.00	\$40.00
1/4 Page	\$40.00	\$80.00
1/2 Page	\$80.00	\$160.00
3/4 Page	\$100.00	\$200.00
Full Page	\$200.00	\$400.00

Ad Material must be computer ready. Ads will be printed at the discretion of the Association. Please send ad requests to the newsletter coordinator at the following e-mail address:

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Newsletter topics of interest may also be suggested at this e-mail address. Thank you for your input!



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We're on the web!
www.rmhma.com