Economic evaluation of zanamivir (relenza) for the treatment of influenza
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Record Status
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Citation

Authors' objectives
The objective of this report is to assess the cost-effectiveness of zanamivir (Relenza(R)) for treating influenza in adults. Cost-effectiveness is assessed for the general population as well as for those at-risk of developing complications related to influenza.

Authors' conclusions
From the perspective of a government healthcare payer, the evidence suggests that it is not cost-effective to prescribe zanamivir for the treatment of influenza in those who are not at risk of influenza-related complications. Zanamivir could be cost-effective in high-risk groups, if the accuracy of diagnosing influenza is relatively high and if significant hospitalizations can be prevented - but the evidence for this is inconclusive at this time. A cause for concern is the likelihood of primary care consultations from those with little risk of complications who would not ordinarily seek treatment. Finally, if zanamivir were to be covered by a drug plan, additional budgetary resources would have to be allocated for the purchase of the drug since it is unlikely that treating high-risk patients with zanamivir will be a cost-saving strategy.

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