

U.S. shortage of Tamiflu for children resolved

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A temporary shortage in the United States of one of the leading flu medicines used to treat children with the sometimes deadly virus has been resolved, Roche, the maker of Tamiflu, said on Thursday.

Due to high demand and packaging delays, Roche had experienced a shortage of supplies of the liquid version of the medicine, known as Tamiflu Oral Suspension, used to treat children under the age of 13 and adults unable to swallow pills.

"We now anticipate having sufficient supply of both the liquid and capsule forms of Tamiflu to meet demand for this flu season," Roche spokeswoman Tara Iannuccillo said in an emailed statement.

The US Food and Drug Administration has added Tamiflu OS to the list of resolved drug shortages on its website with the notation "no supply issues anticipated."

Tamiflu is used to reduce the severity of the flu when taken at the outset of symptoms. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that people get flu shots to prevent the virus.

So far this season, 35 U.S. states have reported widespread cases of flu and another 12 said they had regional influenza activity, with 10 pediatric deaths associated with the virus reported, according to the CDC.

Thousands of people die every year from flu, which typically peaks in the United States between the months of October and March.

Despite the brief shortage of liquid Tamiflu, there has been a continuous supply of the 75 milligram capsules, Roche said.

Tamiflu is manufactured by Roche's U.S. biotech unit Genentech and supplied to retail pharmacies through a network of distributors.

SOURCE Reuters