

Current Status of Avian/Pandemic Influenza

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As of 12 May 2006, there have been 208 cases with 115 deaths with a case fatality rate of 56%. People who have been infected with avian influenza virus might be especially susceptible to avian virus because they are genetically predisposed to it. There have been many family clusters involving blood relatives but not a single case of infection involving husband and wife.

Avian influenza may be capable of infecting people through the gut, not just the respiratory system, and diarrhea is sometimes the first symptom. Particles of the lethal H5N1 virus contained in the meat and blood of infected poultry may have been ingested by some patients, possibly causing their infection. In a number of patients the only exposure risk has been drinking raw duck blood, which could imply that the gastrointestinal tract is also a route of transmission or a route of first infection.



to hands for up to 15 minutes. This indicates the importance of disinfecting common surfaces during a pandemic with alcohol wipes and washing hands with soap and water very frequently. The virus survived on hands for up to 5 minutes after transfer from environmental surfaces. These observations suggest that the transmission of the virus from infected persons who are shedding large amounts could occur for 2-8 hours via stainless steel surfaces and for a few minutes via paper tissues.

Both influenza A and B viruses survived for 24-48 hours on hard, nonporous surfaces such as stainless steel and plastic but survived for less than 8-12 hours on cloth, paper, and tissues. Studies have shown that influenza A virus present on stainless steel surfaces was transferred to hands for up to 24 hours and from tissues

For further information check the Disease Surveillance Unit Web Portal on <http://www.health.gov.mt/dsu/> and TheSYNAPSE Web Portal on <http://www.thesynapse.net/> 

The information is correct as on 13/5/06.

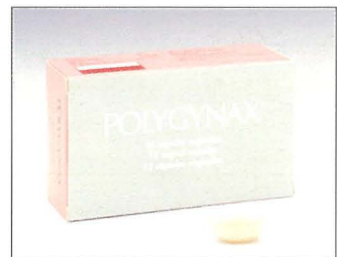


POLYGYNAX
Soothing and treating

Broad Spectrum of action:

- 2 antibacterial agents:
Neomycin and Polymyxin B
- 1 antifungal agent:
Nystatin
- 1 Soothing agent:
Polysiloxane gel

1 pessary
per day at
bedtime for
12 days.



Form and presentation: Vaginal capsule; box of 12. Composition: neomycin (INN) sulfate 35 000 IU, polymyxin B (INN) sulfate; soybean oil, dimethylpolysiloxane q.s.f. 2.50 g. Capsule shell: gelatin, glycerol, dimethylpolysiloxane for a 3.180 g capsule. Therapeutic indications: Local treatment of vaginitis due to sensitive germs and treatment of non specific vaginitis. Official recommendations concerning the appropriate use of antibacterial products must be taken into account. Dosage and administration: FOR ADULTS ONLY: 1 vaginal capsule at bed time for 12 days. Recommendation: - It is recommended to associate the treatment with an adapted hygiene (use of cotton underwear, avoidance of vaginal showers, and avoidance of internal tampons during therapy.) and when possible, avoidance of all favouring factors - Treatment of the sexual partner has to be individually evaluated. - Treatment should not be discontinued during menstruation. Contraindications: This drug is contraindicated in the following cases: - known hypersensitivity to one of the components (or cross-sensitivity.) - Use of diaphragms and/or latex condoms. This medicine is generally not suitable with the use of spermicidal products. Warnings: Therapy should be interrupted in case of local intolerance or allergic reactions. Allergies observed during a local treatment can reappear when using the same antibiotic or related antibiotics. Cautions: The duration of the treatment should be limited in time to avoid the selection

of strains that could lead to superinfection. Due to the lack of data on the respective proportions of neomycin and polymyxin B resorbed by the vaginal mucosa, the possibility of systemic effects, especially in patients with renal failure, cannot be ruled out. Interactions with others drugs and others interactions: Contraindicated association: Condoms: risk of rupture. Unsuitable association: Spermicides: any local therapy can alter the action or spermicidal local contraception. Pregnancy: there are no reliable data about teratogenic effects in animals. In clinic, no malformative or foetotoxic effects have been reported. Nevertheless the number of observations of pregnancies exposed to this drug is low to exclude any risk. In consequence, the use of polygynax is not suitable during pregnancy. Lactation: Due to the absence of data concerning the passage of this drug in the mother's milk, the use of this drug has to be avoided during lactation. Side effects: Possible contact dermatitis, occurring more frequently when used in the long-term. Dermatitis may spread far away from the treated areas. Due to the presence of soybean oil, a risk of hypersensitivity reaction exists (i.e. anaphylactic shock, urticaria). Possible systemic toxicity (kidneys, ears...) is limited due to the short duration of the treatment, shell life: 18 months. Special precautions for storage: store under 23°C and keep dry. Supplied: 12 capsules in a PVC and aluminum blister. Dispensing Conditions: Prescription only drug.

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