

Retail sale of Tamiflu from next week

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New Delhi: The government on Monday finally gave the green signal for retail, yet restricted, sale of Tamiflu — the only known antiviral effective against H1N1 swine flu.

As reported by TOI on September 12, the drug will be available against prescription at 480 chemists across India from next week. Of these, 30 are in Delhi. The notification will be issued on Tuesday.

This was decided at a high level meeting on Monday chaired by Union health minister Ghulam Nabi Azad.

The ministry originally feared that retail sale of the drug would lead to hoarding and random popping of the pill, giving rise to drug resistance in healthy individuals.

However, fears that the number of cases will surge 10 times — thanks to the winter months which are ideal for influenza viruses to propagate — made the ministry decide to allow retail sale of Tamiflu.