



ICAV

International Consortium  
on Anti-Virals



## NEWS RELEASE

# Increasing Worldwide Resistance to Stockpiled Tamiflu Heightens Call for More Anti-Virals

*Canada's 24% Resistance Rate is Greater than Global Average*

Wednesday, April 30, 2008, Peterborough

The World Health Organization (WHO) has reported that isolates of the common flu virus H1N1, are showing a surprising level of resistance to Tamiflu, the anti-viral drug therapy stockpiled around the world to protect against an avian flu pandemic. While annual flu vaccines continue to protect most people, Tamiflu is used quite widely in high risk populations to control outbreaks and so the emerging resistance is of some concern.

According to a recent WHO report tracking the H1N1 virus during the 2007/2008 flu season, Norway had the highest resistance rate of 67%. In Canada, 107 of 454 isolates tested, or 24%, showed resistance to Tami-Flu, which is well above the global average of 14%, and more than double the resistance rate of the United States of 10%. The concern among scientists is that the Tamiflu resistant N1 gene found in H1N1 might be acquired by the highly pathogenic avian flu virus, H5N1.

"There is no question that a broader range of anti-virals is needed to defend against the threat of a pandemic," said Dr. Jeremy Carver, CEO and co-founder of the International Consortium on Anti-Virals (ICAV), who is gathering scientists from around the world from May 3-6 at Trent University and MaRS in Toronto for an international symposium entitled Avian Flu And Public Health: Leads To Drugs To Markets. "The WHO has expressed surprise at the high level of Tamiflu resistance among seasonal flu isolates. It had been believed that the mutation conferring resistance to Tamiflu made the virus less fit. The new data represents quite the opposite."

Anti-virals are considered a key safeguard against the spread of the highly pathogenic H5N1 avian flu virus as they reduce severity of the symptoms in infected people and decrease the probability of infecting others. Anti-virals are effective because they interfere with a virus's life cycle thereby reducing viral load and transmission. Anti-virals are a distinct but complementary public health strategy to vaccines, a first line of defence which can be used to contain outbreaks until vaccines are developed and deployed.

### Media Conference Invitation

**What:**

Sixth Symposium of the International Consortium on Anti-Virals

**When:**

Mon. May 5 at 11:00 a.m.

**Where:**

Room 117, Peter Gzowski College, Trent University

**For more information:**

Please call (705) 748-1011, ext. 6185

ICAV is a not-for-profit drug development company dedicated to accelerating the discovery, development and delivery of novel anti-viral therapies for neglected and emerging viral diseases through the international collaboration of scientists, government and industry. With the support of its many partners, including the federal and Ontario governments, Trent University and the Greater Peterborough Innovation Cluster, ICAV bridges the gap between academic research and commercial development. It achieves this by securing resources, funding proof-of-concept experiments, providing strategic intellectual property advice and tailoring development strategies for prospective anti-viral therapies. ICAV harvests promising drug candidates for clinical development from its international network of over 200 scientists from 24 countries, leveraging resources to accelerate commercialization and adding value for future licensees. ICAV's global headquarters are based at Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario.

The Greater Peterborough Innovation Cluster is a regional economic development initiative focused on commercializing DNA and related life sciences innovation, built on strategic alliances between private and public sector participants.

One of Canada's top universities, Trent University is renowned for striking a unique balance between outstanding teaching and leading-edge research. The University is consistently recognized nationally for faculty who maintain a high level of innovative research activity and a deep commitment to the individual student. Distinguished by excellence in the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences and increasingly popular professional and graduate programs, Trent is dedicated to providing its students with an exceptional world view, producing graduates who are ready to succeed and make a difference in the world.

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