

Flu A Concern For Athletes Competing In Salt Lake City

(NAPSA)—Everyone dreads the thought of catching the flu, being laid up for days, out of work and battling debilitating symptoms. Now imagine that you spent most of your life training for the Olympic Games and you wake up before your big competition with a fever, cough and muscle aches that not only make you feel horrible, but also may destroy your chances of fulfilling a lifelong dream.

“Our athletes certainly are in a position to get the flu, because it’s flu season in the U.S. and people will be coming to Salt Lake City from all over the world, which could mean exposure to multiple strains of the virus,” said Dr. Dan Carr, head physician for the 2002 U.S. Olympic Team.

Sports teams are as close as families, so it’s not surprising that athletes are at high risk of contracting and spreading the flu. This year, Roche, makers of the leading prescription antiviral flu medication, will donate enough Tamiflu for the entire U.S. Olympic delegation.

“We’ve seen athletes miss competitions in the past because of the flu,” continued Carr. “This year we’ll take every precaution to keep our athletes healthy, including stocking medications like Tamiflu that, when taken within two days of developing symptoms, will shorten the duration and severity of the flu.”

Defending Olympic gold medal aerial skier Eric Bergoust knows



Bergoust hopes to be soaring to a gold medal, not sidelined with the flu.

how detrimental the illness can be for athletes, so last year when he got the flu, he got better faster by seeking early treatment.

“I’ve had the flu and you can’t even get out of bed,” said Bergoust. “It’s a huge relief to know that there is an approved medicine available for athletes which I know first-hand really works. I’ll be able to concentrate on winning a medal for the U.S. and not on getting sick.” To find out if flu is in the area log on to www.flustar.com.

Tamiflu is generally well tolerated. The most frequently reported adverse events were mild to moderate, transient nausea or vomiting. Other events reported more frequently than with placebo were bronchitis, insomnia and vertigo. Less than 1 percent of patients discontinued Tamiflu prematurely in clinical trials due to nausea or vomiting. Tamiflu is not a substitute for vaccines, which are the primary method of preventing influenza. There is no evidence for efficacy of Tamiflu in any illness other than influenza types A&B.