

Here are this week's health care news highlights from AskaPatient:

- Starting in 2019, hospitals must post standard prices for treatments online, though prices do not reflect what insurance pays. <http://ow.ly/ZRDR30n8LvB> (12-31-18)
- Leukemia researchers wants to create a drink full of healthy bacteria in hopes of warding off the disease. <http://ow.ly/nNil30n8LBE> (12-31-18)
- Before turning to the popular CBD oil for everything that ails you, keep in mind there can be drug interactions. <http://ow.ly/PxPf30n857o> (12-31-18)
- Adults are not the only ones affected by opioids - children are dying from a parent's prescription. <http://ow.ly/zXCT30n8LNf> (01-01-18)
- New 'atlas' of genetic factors associated with osteoporosis identifies over 500 variables across the genome. <http://ow.ly/EnA230n9zBW> (01-02-18)
- Inherent 'kill code' in our cells could be harnessed to treat cancer without chemotherapy. <http://ow.ly/S3JX30n9zDA> (01-02-18)
- Drug companies are competing to develop a treatment for a disease that millions of Americans may not know that they have. <http://ow.ly/mjUU30n9zJN> (01-02-18)
- Many female health care workers face poverty and are unable to afford health insurance. <http://ow.ly/P0aB30naxzf> (01-03-18)
- Skipping recommended cancer screenings indicates health behaviors that increase risk of non-cancer death. <http://ow.ly/QXs430naxFU> (01-03-18)
- Drinkable cocktail repairs damage from Alzheimer's and restores memories in mice. <http://ow.ly/KyNI30naxJR> (01-03-18)
- Public Health England finds the average 10 year-old has eaten 18 years worth of sugar, urges parents swap out sugary treats. <http://ow.ly/4yRv30naxTi> (01-03-18)
- U.S. drugmakers kick off 2019 with hundreds of prescription drug price hikes. <http://ow.ly/TCNW30nbm3Y> (01-04-18)
- Widely used food additive that functions like an enzyme in our body may cause celiac disease. <http://ow.ly/mhFm30nbnu1> (01-04-18)
- Researchers spend increasing amounts of time writing grant applications for ever-shrinking resources. <http://ow.ly/aikW30nbncr> (01-04-18)
- Eating at least one egg per day appears to help protect against type 2 diabetes. <http://ow.ly/IQU030nbncr> (01-04-18)
- Only half of adults who think they have a food allergy actually do, though they are still very common. <http://ow.ly/CLuD30ncjKI> (01-05-18)
- Federal judge rules companies involved in 1940's syphilis experiment in Guatemala must face \$1 billion lawsuit. <http://ow.ly/jcLr30ncjKI> (01-05-18)
- Breathalyzer device begins a 2-year trial in the UK to see if airborne molecules from breath can be used to detect cancer. <http://ow.ly/LxrR30ncjNx> (01-05-18)
- FDA announced a recall of an **additional eight lots** of generic blood pressure drug **losartan potassium tablets** by Torrent Pharmaceuticals. See the FDA web site at: <https://www.fda.gov/Safety/Recalls/ucm629261.htm> Also see related article on our web site, <https://www.askapatient.com/news/generic-api-valsartan-worldwide-recall.asp> (01-03-18)

New Drug Snapshots: Two priority-designated drug approvals in 2018 include a remedy for travelers afflicted with "Montezuma's

Revenge" and the first new flu treatment in 20 years

I. A remedy for sick travelers

If your travel plans this year include destinations in Asia or the Middle East, Africa, Mexico, or Central or South America, you may be at risk of acquiring food or water-borne bacteria that can cause "Montezuma's Revenge," or traveler's diarrhea. Considered to be the most common travel-related illness, the condition affects an estimated 10 to 40% of international travelers each year.

Aemcolo, a new prescription antibacterial treatment helps patients recover faster than if they had no treatment. If you feel that you may be at risk, consider obtaining the medication BEFORE you go on your trip so that you will have it on hand "just in case." Alternatively, the prescription may be filled while you are traveling, depending on pharmacy availability.

Some quick facts about Aemcolo:

Date of approval: 11/16/2018

Active ingredient: rifamycin

Company: Cosmo Technologies

Dosage form and strength: delayed-release tablets of 194 mg rifamycin

How administered: two tablets daily for three days

Approved for use by: adults (age 18 and up) with traveler's diarrhea caused by *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*)

Not for use by: patients with fever or with blood in the stool, patients with gastrointestinal conditions such as C.diff., or by patients with an allergy to rifamycin.

Side effects: headache and constipation are the most common adverse effects according to the drug label.

Clinical trial: tested on 619 adults traveling in Mexico and Guatemala.

II. The first new flu medication in 20 years offers easier dosage, potential of less side effects

In 1999, the FDA approved a new influenza drug called Tamiflu, which promised to lessen the duration of flu symptoms by a day when taken within 48 hours of getting the flu. Fast-forward twenty years later, and Tamiflu is still widely used but has been linked to serious side effects that weren't initially disclosed on the drug label. These include dangerous skin reactions and neuropsychiatric events like hallucinations and night terrors in children and adolescents.

Xofluza, the new flu drug approved in 2018, also claims to reduce symptoms and speed recovery from the flu by about a day. The pros of Xofluza include **one-time dosing**, not a five-day regimen like Tamiflu. Also, while drug side effects often don't emerge until after a drug is actually on the market for awhile, the clinical trials data for Xofluza don't suggest a high incidence of nausea side effects (which is a problem side effect of [Tamiflu](#) for many patients).

Some quick facts about Xofluza:

Date of approval: 10/24/2018

Active ingredient: baloxavir marboxil

U.S. distribution company: Genentech, Inc.

Manufacturer: Shionogi & Co., Ltd. (Japan)

Dosage form and strength: tablets of 20 or 40 mg baloxavir marboxil

How administered: one-time dosage of 20 mg tablet if you weigh 80 kg (175 pounds) or less; use the 40 mg tablet if you weigh 80 kg (175 pounds) or more.

Caveats: must be taken within 48 hours of symptom onset.

Approved for use by: patients **12 years of age and older** with uncomplicated influenza who have had symptoms for less than 48 hours.

Side effects: diarrhea, bronchitis, common cold symptoms, headache, and nausea are the most common side effects according to the drug label.

Clinical trial: two clinical trials involved 1,119 patients with influenza-like illness; the trials took place in Japan and the United States. 910 trial patients received doses of Xofluza.

Sources and more reading:

Both Aemcolo and Xofluza received FDA **priority** review, which means that the FDA takes action on a drug application within 6 months (compared with 10 months under standard review).

- Explanation of how FDA decides which drug applications receive expedited review, and the types of designations:

<https://www.fda.gov/ForPatients/Approvals/Fast/ucm405405.htm>

- Approved Drug Label for [Aemcolo](#) (rifamycin)
- Approved Drug Label for [Xofluza](#) (baloxavir marboxil)
- Xofluza [Safety profile](#) from drug label.

Contact AskaPatient at admin@askapatient.com
Send newsletter feedback or suggestions to AskaPatientNews@askapatient.com
Subscribe at <https://www.askapatient.com>
[unsubscribe from this list](#)



Copyright © *|CURRENT_YEAR|* AskaPatient ®