

Brazil Gets 90 Million Doses of Tamiflu in Preparation for Bird Flu

Contributed by Yara Aquino
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Although there still have not been any cases of bird flu in Brazil, the country, according to Brazilian authorities continues its preparations for its possible arrival.

Brazilian Minister of Health, Saraiva Felipe, reports that the country now has over 90 million doses of Tamiflu, the only known effective drug for that kind of flu.

Tamiflu is a drug that can be given to people who have bird flu, or used preventatively on people who do not have the symptoms.

Brazil also has 46 so-called sentinel units in place around the country which can analyze types of viruses so that the proper vaccines can be made available.

More sentinel units are scheduled to be operating by the beginning of next year. Each state will have at least one unit.

The Ministry says that the secret to effective control of a virus like bird flu is rapid diagnosis. "If detection is quick we can contain the spread," says Jarbas Barbosa, the head of the secretariat of Health Vigilance.

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