

AVIAN INFLUENZA

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The image is a composite of two photographs. The top photograph shows several brown chickens with red combs and wattles, crowded together in white metal wire cages. The bottom photograph shows a large flock of ducks in an outdoor setting. In the foreground, many white ducks are gathered on a sandy or dirt ground. In the background, a pond is visible with several grey ducks swimming in the water.

BIRD FLU

(Avian Influenza)



WHAT IS BIRD FLU?

- Bird Flu or Avian Influenza is a type of contagious disease that infects poultry and birds
- Influenza virus type A causes Bird Flu. This virus has many subtypes. Most of the current outbreaks reported is caused by subtype H5N1 and H7N7
- Migratory waterfowls are the natural reservoir of this virus
- Human can be infected if exposed directly to sick birds or poultry.

HOW IT IS SPREAD?

a) Among birds

Through droplets from the nose, saliva and droppings. This virus can survive in bird droppings up till 30 days.

b) From birds to human

Human can be infected through:

- Direct contact with sick poultry, birds and their produces
- Droppings of sick birds
- Water contaminated with the droppings of sick birds
- Objects such as containers, cages, and clothes contaminated with the droppings and droplets of sick birds



WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS?

- High fever (more than 38°C)
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Headache
- Muscle / joint ache
- Fatigue

COMPLICATIONS OF THE INFECTION CAN CAUSE PNEUMONIA AND LEAD TO DEATH

WHO ARE AT RISK?

- a) Farm workers and family members whose poultry/birds have been infected
- b) Traders and workers who deal with poultry, birds and eggs
- c) Veterinarians who handle sick birds
- d) Those involved with culling of infected birds
- e) Those who are handling birds kept:
 - for cock fighting
 - for competitions
 - as a pet.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF?

- Those working in animal farms should use masks, gloves, apron and boots. Take a shower and change before going home
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and clean water
- Ensure you only obtain poultry meat from reliable sources
- Wear gloves or use plastic to handle carcasses of birds. Do not handle carcasses of birds with bare hands
- Abide to all directives and regulations issued by the authorities

REPORT UNUSUAL DEATHS AMONG POULTRY/ BIRDS TO THE VETERINARY DEPARTMENT



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