

Pandemic Flu FAQs

Will the seasonal flu shot protect me against pandemic flu?

No, it will not protect you against pandemic flu. Flu shots can help you to avoid seasonal flu.

Will bird flu cause the next flu pandemic?

Avian flu (bird flu) is a disease of wild and farm birds caused by avian influenza viruses. Bird flu viruses do not usually infect humans. Since 1997, there have been a number of confirmed cases of human infection from bird flu viruses. Most of these resulted from direct or close contact with infected birds (for example: domesticated chickens, ducks, and turkeys). *It is important not to handle, play with, or pick up dead birds.* Information on who to contact in your state is at: <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/state/statecontacts.html>

The spread of bird flu viruses from an infected person to another person has been rarely reported. A worldwide pandemic could occur if a bird flu virus were to change so that it could easily be passed from person to person. Experts around the world are watching for changes in bird flu viruses that could lead to an influenza pandemic.

What should I do if I travel to an area with confirmed bird-flu?

- Avoid contact with live poultry and wild birds
- Avoid visiting live animal markets and poultry farms
- Avoid contact with surfaces contaminated with animal droppings/feces
- Avoid handling birds found dead
- Do not eat or handle undercooked/raw poultry, egg or duck dishes
- Exercise good personal hygiene with frequent hand washing

After You Return from an Infected Area:

- Monitor your health for 10 days.
- If you become ill with a fever plus cough, sore throat, or trouble breathing during this 10-day period, consult a doctor. Before you visit your doctor inform him of:
 - ✓ Your symptoms
 - ✓ Where you traveled
 - ✓ Direct contact you had with poultry or close-contact with any severely ill person(s)

What should I do if I become sick while traveling/driving?

Until evaluated by the healthcare provider, you should minimize/avoid contact with others to reduce the risk of spreading disease.

If you become sick with symptoms of fever with:

- Cough
- Sore throat

- Difficulty breathing, or
- Develop any illness that requires prompt medical attention

Report to the nearest healthcare facility and advise your employer immediately regarding your health status.

Is it safe to eat poultry (chicken, turkey, and other domesticated birds)?

Yes, it is safe to eat properly cooked poultry. Cooking destroys germs, including bird flu viruses. The United States maintains trade restrictions on the importation of poultry and poultry products from countries where the highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza strain has been detected in commercial or traditionally raised poultry, not in wild or migratory birds.

Guidelines for the safe preparation of poultry include the following:

- Wash your hands before and after handling food.
- Keep raw poultry and its juices away from other foods.
- Keep your hands, utensils, and surfaces, such as cutting boards clean.
- Use a food thermometer to ensure food has reached the safe internal temperature - in all parts of the bird. Cook poultry to at least 165°F to kill food-borne germs that might be present, including the avian influenza virus.

For more information, see poultry preparation fact sheets at:

http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/Poultry_Preparation_Fact_Sheets/index.asp

What types of birds can carry bird flu viruses?

Avian influenza viruses can infect chickens, turkeys, pheasants, quail, ducks, geese, and guinea fowl, as well as a wide variety of other birds, including migratory waterfowl.

Information produced by FMCSA: Office of Medical Programs