



Protect Yourself Avian Flu General Precautions

Avian flu is a viral disease and it can be very contagious and even deadly in poultry (e.g., chickens). Of great concern are the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) H5N1 viruses that have killed millions of birds and infected humans in other countries. If these viruses are detected in the U.S. or if you travel on work assignments or are employed in countries that have HPAI H5N1 outbreaks, take appropriate precautions.

Avian Flu Symptoms in Humans

Range from fever, cough, sore throat and muscle aches; to diarrhea, eye infections, pneumonia and severe respiratory diseases. The symptoms of avian influenza may depend on which virus caused the infection but are often similar to those associated with human seasonal influenza.

How Humans Are Infected

- Contact with sick poultry or surfaces soiled with discharges from their mouths or beaks, or with feces.
- Inhaling contaminated particles from poultry.

Treatment

Some prescription antiviral drugs may be effective.

General Precautions

- Wash hands thoroughly and frequently, for 15-20 seconds, preferably with soap and water.
- Avoid contact with possibly infected poultry.
- Avoid consuming uncooked or undercooked poultry or poultry products.

Precautions When Exposed

- Use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE):
 - ◆ Disposable gloves or gloves that can be disinfected;
 - ◆ Protective clothing (long-sleeved coveralls with a water-proof apron);
 - ◆ Disposable shoe covers or those that can be disinfected;
 - ◆ Safety goggles; and
 - ◆ Wear at least the minimum level of respiratory protection, N95 or higher respirator.
- Employees should remove all PPE at work to avoid taking contaminated items home.

Additional Guidance

- Get the seasonal flu vaccine.
- If you develop flu-like symptoms, stay at home except to get medical attention.

For more complete information:

 Occupational
Safety and Health
Administration
U.S. Department of Labor
www.osha.gov (800) 321-OSHA

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