

Influenza in People

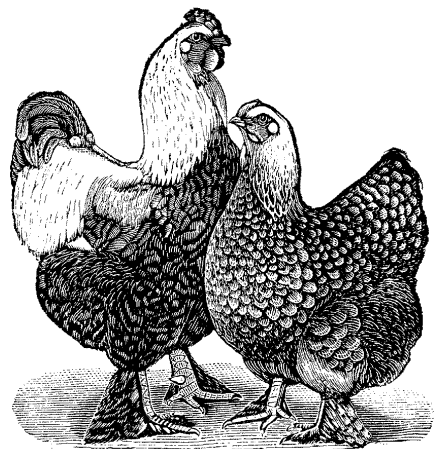
What about influenza in people?

Every year, human influenza viruses spread between people worldwide, causing hundreds of thousands of deaths. Public health officials monitor which strains of human flu viruses are circulating each year and develop vaccines to help protect people. These vaccines, however, will not protect people from an entirely new strain, such as a potential new strain related to the H5N1 “bird flu” virus.

How can I best protect my family?

Although it is impossible to eliminate the risk of influenza, you can do some simple things to reduce your family’s risk:

- Get vaccinated for influenza, depending on your doctor’s advice.
- Wash your hands frequently, particularly after handling pets, birds, or livestock.
- If you do become ill, consider working from home or staying home from work or school rather than potentially infecting co-workers, customers or students.



Additional Resources and Contacts

The *Colorado Avian Influenza Surveillance and Education Task Force* coordinates the efforts of state agencies, federal partners, universities, animal industry, and non-governmental partners.

Important Contact Information:

CO HELP: Colorado Health Education Line for the Public: 1-877-462-2911

Colorado Dept. of Public Health and Environment, 303.692.2000 www.cdphe.state.co.us/dc/Influenza/

Colorado Department of Agriculture, Division of Animal Industry: 303-239-4161, www.ag.state.co.us/animals/animals.html

Colorado State University, Animal Diagnostic Laboratories, (970) 297-1281, www.dlab.colostate.edu/ or ColoradoBirdHealth.org

Colorado Division of Wildlife, (303) 297-1192, <http://wildlife.state.co.us>

Colorado Veterinary Medical Association, Foundation and State Animal Response Team program, (303) 318-0447, www.cvma.org, www.coloradosart.org

AVIAN INFLUENZA RESOURCES:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Avian Influenza site: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/>

Avian Flu Fact Sheet (U.S. Department of State) – 10/19/2005 http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/health/health_1181.html

USDA Biosecurity page for poultry owners: www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/birdbiosecurity/

Official federal site with many avian and pandemic influenza resources: www.pandemicflu.gov

Version 4-13-06: Information in this brochure was accurate as of this date. Please check www.coloradobirdhealth.org for updates.

AVIAN INFLUENZA

The Bird Flu and You



Information for the general public on Avian Influenza and what it means to you and your family

Prepared by

The Colorado Avian Influenza Surveillance and Education Task Force

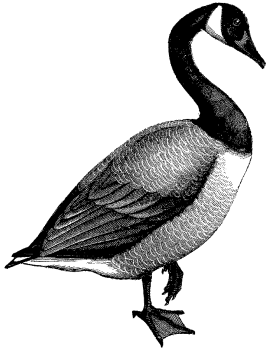
Including:
Colorado State University
Colorado Department of Agriculture
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
Colorado Division of Wildlife
Colorado Veterinary Medical Association
Colorado Veterinary Medical Foundation
Colorado Poultry Health Board
Colorado Livestock Association

With appreciation for assistance from the US Department of Agriculture and the US Fish and Wildlife Service

What is Avian Influenza?

Avian influenza (AI) or “bird flu” is a disease caused by a virus that primarily affects birds. AI is most commonly seen in wild birds, especially waterfowl, but can infect domestic birds as well.

Many strains of AI exist in wild birds, much as with colds in people, and new strains emerge frequently. A few of these strains become highly dangerous in domestic poultry, such as chickens and turkeys, while still only causing mild signs in most wild birds.



Why are we hearing so much about AI?

There is currently a large-scale outbreak of a dangerous strain of AI called H5N1 in Asia, Africa and Europe that is affecting both wild birds and domestic poultry. There are two major concerns with this outbreak:

1. This disease threatens the poultry production industry worldwide, including our nation.
2. This particular strain of virus has been able to infect people with a small number of human deaths. So far, however, this virus has not been shown to easily spread from person to person. If the virus were to mutate further, it might develop the ability to spread quickly from person to person, resulting in a world-wide outbreak called a **pandemic**.

Currently, H5N1 avian influenza has not been found in either North or South America in either wild or domestic birds.

What do I need to know about avian influenza?

Is it safe to eat poultry products?

Yes, There is currently no risk from H5N1 avian influenza in our US poultry products. As always, poultry, meat, and fish products should be cooked thoroughly and you should wash your hands and utensils after working with an uncooked product.

Should I be concerned about wild birds around my house?

No, at this time songbirds and most other wild birds do not represent an avian influenza threat.

What should I do if I own domestic poultry?

If you keep domestic poultry, you should minimize contact between your domestic birds and wild birds, especially wild waterfowl. It is essential to practice good **biosecurity** including:

- Keeping your facility clean
- Not sharing equipment with other flock owners
- Isolating new birds for 10-14 days before introducing them into your flock
- Wearing designated clean clothing and shoes (or shoe covers) when working in poultry areas
- Consulting a veterinarian promptly if birds are sick or dying
- Always washing your hands after handling poultry, especially if they are sick



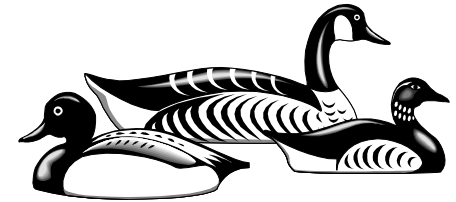
Who should I contact concerning dead birds or other questions related to avian influenza?

CO HELP: 1-877-462-2911

Colorado Health Education Line for the Public for current information and additional resources

What if I hunt birds this fall?

Hunters should use disposable, waterproof gloves when field dressing game birds or any animal. If you cannot wash your hands immediately afterwards, use waterless hand sanitizers.



Is this the same as influenza in dogs or horses?

No. You may have heard about influenza in horses and more recently in dogs. These viruses are not a health threat to people.

What is our nation and Colorado doing about avian influenza?

Currently, there is an ongoing international effort to control the spread of H5N1 avian influenza. In our country, we are monitoring wild bird populations, particularly those in Alaska where contact with wild birds from around the globe is most likely.

Colorado has stepped up testing of poultry in commercial farms, live bird markets, fairs and exhibits. This monitoring program helps test for H5N1 as well as any other strains of AI, allowing for the earliest possible response.

