

# BIRD FLU: FACTS & GUIDELINES

Bird flu, or avian flu, or avian influenza (AI) is an infectious type of influenza that spreads among birds. In rare cases, it can affect humans.

## Key Facts

Bird flu is caused by Influenza type A virus. There are lots of different strains of bird flu virus. Most of them don't infect humans. But there are 4 strains viz. H5N1, H7N9, H5N6 and H5N8 that have caused concern in recent years.

Aquatic birds are the primary natural reservoir for most subtypes of influenza A viruses. The virus can infect domestic poultry and other bird and animal species. Avian flu viruses do not normally infect humans. However, sporadic human infections with avian flu viruses have occurred.

The majority of human cases of influenza A (H5N1) and A(H7N9) virus infection have been associated with direct or indirect contact with infected live or dead poultry.

Human infections are primarily acquired through direct contact with infected animals or contaminated environments. The spread of avian influenza A viruses from one ill person to another has been reported very rarely and when it has been reported it has been limited and inefficient.

Influenza viruses, with the vast silent reservoir in aquatic birds, are impossible to eradicate. To minimize public health risk, quality surveillance in both animal and human populations, thorough investigation of every human infection and risk-based pandemic planning are essential.

## Transmission of virus and symptoms

### 1. DIRECT CONTACT



Most common mode of transmission: Handling of infected poultry, and preparing poultry for consumption are likely to be the risk factors.

#### Note:

Consumption of cooked chicken and eggs do not cause or spread bird flu

Human to human mode of transmission of the disease is extremely rare. Even if it is transmitted, the infection is of limited and inefficient type.

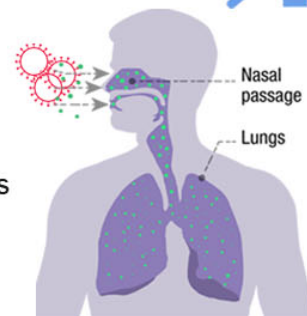
There is no vaccine for bird flu. Common influenza vaccines do not protect against bird flu

### 2. CONTAMINATED SURFACES

- Contaminated floors of poultry sheds and slaughter houses could spread the virus
- Aerosol mode of spread.
- Aerosol of viruses could be generated by flapping wings, scratching of floors



- Human infections with bird flu viruses can happen when enough virus gets into a person's eyes, nose or mouth, or is inhaled.



## Symptoms

The main symptoms of bird flu can appear very quickly (3-5 days) in human and include:

- a very high temperature or feeling hot or shivery
- aching muscles
- headache
- cough

Other early symptoms may include: diarrhoea, sickness, stomach pain, chest pain, bleeding from the nose and gums, conjunctivitis

# Responding to the avian influenza threat

## Recommended actions

### Poultry farmers

the solution is **BIO-SECURITY**

- People should disinfect or change shoes and clothes when entering a farm.
- The farm should be kept free of droppings that could spread the virus.
- Dead poultry should be removed and incinerated or buried deep in the ground to avoid the transmission of the virus to healthy birds.
- Farm clothes, tools and transport equipment should be regularly disinfected to avoid the transmission of the virus to other poultry farms.
- The water and air entering and leaving the poultry farm should be filtered.
- Farmers have to make sure that wildlife and poultry are strictly separated. Wild birds or other animals should not have access to poultry water and food.
- Always use foot dips at the entry into the sheds and feed godowns.
- Keep the poultry litter dry and fly maggot free, wet litter and fly maggot larvae attract wild birds.
- Immediately report any type of sickness in birds to nearest veterinary center



### DO's

- Good respiratory hygiene: covering mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, using tissues and disposing of them correctly
- Cook poultry meat and eggs thoroughly
- Before and after handling raw poultry and eggs, wash your hands with warm water and soap
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water after exposure to/or contact with birds
- Eat nutritious diet along with regular exercise
- Immediately report any unusual death or sickness of birds to the nearest, local authorities or nearest veterinary hospital

### Poultry dealers/ slaughter houses

- Keep a proper record of source of poultry birds and track of supplies to retailers to ensure traceability
- Do not sell dead birds to consumer or dispose them in open. Dead birds shall be burnt or buried deep in ground.
- Dispose off poultry offals carefully and at the designated places and not throw them in open.
- Immediately report any type of sickness in birds to nearest veterinary center

### Animal Husbandry Department, UT of J&K

- Action plan of Animal Husbandry for preparedness, control and containment of bird flu issued by Govt shall be strictly adhered to.
- The provisions of the Prevention and Control of Infectious and Contagious Diseases in Animals Act 2009 shall be strictly adhered to.
- Rigorous inspection of all poultry imports at the Lakhanpur checkpost.
- District Surveillance committees shall be constituted immediately to ensure checking of all poultry units and sale points.



### DON'ts

- Don't eat raw or undercooked poultry meat or egg
- Don't buy or eat smuggled poultry meat
- Avoid contact with wild or migratory birds. Do not chase away or kill wild birds
- Don't visit poultry enclosures without wearing full protective equipment .
- Do not go close to or touch dead birds or their droppings
- While storing meat, even in the fridge, do not keep raw meat near the cooked meat

