

Frequently Asked Questions:

What is the risk to humans from bird flu?

The bird flu virus does not usually infect humans. In 1997, however, the first case of infection from a bird to a human was identified in Hong Kong. Most recently, human cases have occurred in Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Indonesia. Almost all cases to date have occurred after direct contact with infected poultry.

How is infection in humans treated? Is there a vaccine?

Currently no vaccine has been approved to provide protection against bird flu. However, vaccine development efforts are under way. For more information about the vaccine visit National Institutes of Health's website at <http://www.nih.gov>.

Anti-viral compounds such as amantadine, rimantadine, zanamavir and oseltamavir (Tamiflu) have shown **some** efficacy against other Influenza A viruses, and initial studies suggest that it may be effective as a treatment for 'bird flu.' NO use of Tamiflu or other antiviral medications is recommended for prophylaxis against the disease.

Is it safe to eat poultry and eggs?

No human cases of AI contracted from poultry or egg consumption have been reported. Nonetheless, the World Health Organization recommends

5 Keys to Safer Food.

- Separate raw meat from cooked or ready to eat foods and do not use the same chopping board or knife
- Do not handle both raw and cooked foods without washing your hands in between
- Do not use raw or soft-boiled eggs in food preparations that will not be heat treated or cooked
- Keep clean with soap and water. Wash your hands after handling frozen, thawed, or raw chicken or eggs. Thoroughly wash surfaces and utensils that have been in contact with raw meat.
- Cook all poultry thoroughly – this will inactivate viruses. Ensure that the meat is not pink.
- Egg yolks should not be eaten when runny or liquid.



TO DATE THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE IS NOT AN AREA AFFECTED BY BIRD FLU, AS FAR AS IS KNOWN BY THE HHS, CDC, OR WHO.

How is the US Government helping to address the bird flu problem?

The US Congress appropriated 25 million dollars in June 2005 to help contain and prevent its spread. Our government has proposed an "International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza" to address the emerging threat.

What are the symptoms of bird flu?

Symptoms of bird flu in humans have ranged from typical flu-like symptoms (fever, cough, sore throat and muscle aches) to eye infections, pneumonia, severe respiratory diseases, and other severe and life-threatening complications. The most consistent symptoms include fever greater than 38C or 100.4F and a respiratory syndrome including a non-productive cough and sore throat.

REFERENCES:

- <http://www.who.int/foodsafety/micro/avian1/en/>
- <http://www.nih.gov>
- <http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian>
- <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/gen-info/facts.htm>
- http://www.cdc.gov/travel/other/avian_flu_indonesia.htm
- <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/mideast.htm>
- http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/subjects/en/health/diseases-cards/special_avian.html