

Three Kinds of Flu

Seasonal Flu

Seasonal flu is caused by human influenza viruses. It spreads through coughs or sneezes from infected people. Each year, about 36,000 Americans die from seasonal flu. Young children, the elderly, and people with chronic health problems are at greatest risk for flu complications. The annual flu shot is the best protection against seasonal flu.

Avian (Bird) Flu

Avian (bird) flu refers to flu viruses usually found in birds, but infections can occur in humans. The risk is generally low to most people because the viruses do not usually infect humans. Since 1997, more than 270 people in the world have been infected with avian flu H5N1, mostly through close contact with infected birds. Currently, no human vaccine for avian flu H5N1 is available.

Pandemic Flu

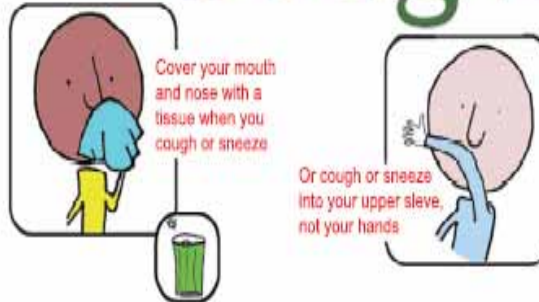
Pandemic influenza refers to any **new** type of influenza virus, for which individuals do not have protection, thus having the potential to cause a worldwide outbreak. Past pandemics have caused high rates of illness, hospitalization, and death in all age groups. Health officials are concerned that avian flu *could* cause a pandemic, but right now there is no flu pandemic.

www.dadehealth.org

Stop the spread of germs that make you and others sick!

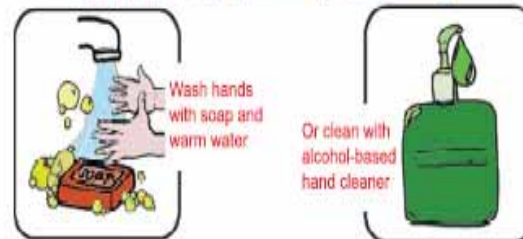
Avian Influenza

Cover Your Cough



Clean Your hands

after coughing or sneezing



Source: CDC - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Office of Epidemiology and Disease Control

 (305) 470-5660 (24/7)

Avian Influenza (Bird Flu)



Miami-Dade County Health Department



What is avian influenza (bird flu)?

Bird flu is an illness caused by a virus that exists naturally in wild birds. They usually do not get sick, but they carry the virus and can pass it on to non-wild birds, (e.g. chickens and ducks), which can become sick and die. Bird flu can also affect humans. The form of bird flu currently causing human illness in the world is called H5N1.

How is the disease spread?

Some birds carry the virus in their intestines and bodily fluids, (e.g. saliva, nasal secretions and feces). Humans can become infected through close contact with infected birds or these contaminated fluids.

Can bird flu spread from person to person?

So far, spread of H5N1 bird flu from person to person has been rare and has not continued beyond one person. If the H5N1 virus gained the capacity to spread easily from person to person, an influenza pandemic (worldwide outbreak) could begin.

How common is bird flu in humans?

Bird flu viruses do not generally infect people, but there have been over 270 cases of human infection from H5N1 bird flu since 1997.

What are the symptoms of bird flu in humans?

Symptoms have ranged from typical flu-like symptoms (e.g., fever, cough, sore throat and muscle aches) to eye infections, pneumonia, shortness of breath, and other severe and life-threatening complications.

How is bird flu in humans treated?

Antiviral medications approved for human flu strains may be effective for treatment of bird flu.

Is there a vaccine?

Currently, no vaccine is commercially available. Scientists are developing and testing a vaccine. The seasonal flu vaccine does not prevent bird flu.

Is it safe to eat cooked chicken or turkey?

Yes. Bird flu viruses are easily destroyed at high temperatures. Cook raw poultry to an internal temperature of at least 165° F. Be careful when handling raw meat to avoid spreading germs. Wash hands and surfaces before and after food preparation; and avoid cross contamination of raw and cooked foods.

Have there been human cases of bird flu in the United States?

There have been no cases of bird flu reported in humans in the U.S. Human cases have been detected in several other countries around the world. Strains of bird flu have been detected in birds in the U.S; however these strains cause little or no illness in birds and do not pose a health threat to humans.

What are health officials doing to prepare for bird flu?

Current preparedness efforts include active surveillance among both birds and humans, vaccine testing, education, and partnerships with agencies involved in emergency planning and response.

What should I do to prevent bird flu?

- Practice good respiratory hygiene. Wash your hands often, cover coughs and sneezes, avoid close contact with sick people, and stay away from others when ill.
- Do not handle birds that are sick or dead. Report any wild bird death to the Miami-Dade County Health Department, Division of Environmental Health. Call 305-324-2400 Monday to Friday, during holidays, weekends, and outside normal working hours. You can also report dead birds to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission database at <http://myfwc.com/bird/>
- When traveling abroad, avoid close contact with birds. Monitor your health for 10 days after travel to a country affected by bird flu.

For more information, go to:
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/>

