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Pandemic Influenza & Avian Influenza

What you need to know

Food Safety

Commercial Poultry

- U.S. commercial poultry is grown, inspected and processed at the highest safety standards in the world
- Poultry is inspected prior to processing and again after processing
- Sick or dead birds are not processed
- All poultry flocks are tested for avian influenza

Cooking

- With proper handling and cooking, the avian influenza virus presents no food safety threat to people.
- Wash your hands when handling food
- Clean all surfaces in contact with raw meat
- Keep foods cold before and after cooking
- Do not cross-contaminate cooked and uncooked items, including utensils, hands and preparation surfaces
- Poultry should be cooked to an internal temperature of 170 degrees F.

Food Supply Safety

- Commercial flocks are raised indoors
- Biosecurity prevents wild bird exposure
- Animals are not kept in close human contact
- Flocks are regularly tested for disease
- 75,000 + birds annually

Hunter Harvest Handling

- Do not handle or eat sick game
- Wear rubber or disposable gloves while handling and cleaning game, wash hands as described above, and thoroughly clean knives, equipment and surfaces that come in contact with game.
- Do not eat, drink, or smoke while handling animals.
- All game should be thoroughly cooked (well done or 160 degrees F).

Resources

The information included in this newsletter was used with permission from the Indiana State Department of Health.

Indiana State Department of Health

Indiana State Dept. of Health
www.isdh.in.gov

Indiana Board of Animal Health
www.boah.in.gov

Indiana Dept. of Natural Resources
www.dnr.in.gov

Indiana Dept. of Homeland Security
www.in.gov/dhs

U.S Government Pandemic Flu Info
www.pandemicflu.gov

U.S. Government Avian Flu Info
www.avianflu.gov

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Avian Influenza (Bird Flu)

Avian influenza, commonly known as "bird flu", is a viral disease of poultry. Worldwide, bird flu can be found in many different strains that have different effects on wild birds and domestic poultry. Few of the strains have any impact on human health.

The spread of a highly pathogenic avian H5N1 virus across eastern Asia and into Europe and Africa represents a significant threat to individuals who have very close contact with infected birds and/or consume improperly prepared food products from infected poultry.

H5N1 has not been diagnosed in North America.

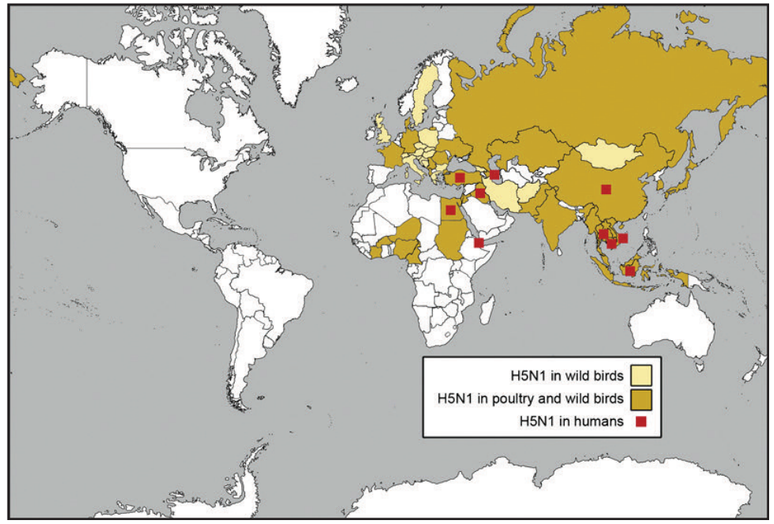
Cases of various strains of avian influenza may be identified, from time to time, in the United States; however, diagnosis of the disease does not signal the start of a pandemic.

Public health professionals are concerned that a mutation in the H5N1 virus could result in a virus capable of causing a potential human pandemic. While this virus has passed from infected poultry to humans and other mammals, the disease has not reached a pandemic level, because the H5N1 strain cannot be passed from human to human.

Clinical Signs of Bird Flu:

Poultry owners who see any of the following signs in their birds should call 1-866-536-7593 for guidance:

- Sudden death without clinical signs
- Lack of energy and appetite
- Decreased egg production
- Soft-shelled or misshapen eggs
- Swelling of the head, eyelids, comb, wattles, hocks
- Purple discoloration of the wattles, combs, legs
- Nasal discharge
- Coughing, sneezing
- Incoordination
- Diarrhea



Global map shows areas where confirmed human cases of avian influenza have been reported to the World Health Organization (WHO). No reports have been made in the U.S.

What is the difference between avian influenza and pandemic influenza?

Avian influenza, also known as **Bird Flu**, is a disease of birds that can occasionally affect people. Avian flu is NOT the same thing as a human influenza pandemic, and any report of avian flu in the U.S. or elsewhere in North America would NOT signal the start of a human flu pandemic.

While it is possible that humans could contract a form of avian flu through close contact with a bird, a human pandemic would be the result of a **new strain** of flu that can be efficiently transmitted human to human. Experts say a form of avian flu could potentially mutate into a strain that can be transmitted human to human, but there is currently NO evidence of any such mutation involving the strain that has been reported recently in Asia, Africa and Europe.

U.S. commercial poultry is produced and inspected at the **highest standards** in the world and avian flu does NOT present a significant risk to the safety of the domestic poultry and egg supply. Pro-active steps are being taken to monitor the risk of avian flu in the U.S. Surveillance of wild and domestic birds is underway nationally, including in Indiana.

While there is no evidence of an imminent human flu pandemic, experts have issued warnings about the possibility, and Indiana is **aggressively preparing** for such an event. The recent Pandemic Influenza Summit at Purdue University brought together officials from both the public and private sectors to discuss steps that could be taken to minimize the impact of any future pandemic. Also, state agencies are working hard to develop "Continuity of Operations" and "Continuity of Government" plans to ensure that essential services will still be provided during a pandemic.

Human Influenza

Influenza ("the flu") is spread from one person to another through sneezing or coughing and unclean hands. The virus is taken into the body through the nose or mouth. Even someone who does not feel sick can pass the virus to others. To help stop the spread of germs, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands. Put your used tissue in the wastebasket. To clean your hands after coughing or sneezing, wash with soap and water, or clean with alcohol-based hand cleaner.

Pandemic Influenza

Pandemic influenza occurs when a new influenza virus emerges for which people have little or no immunity. The disease spreads easily from person-to-person, causes serious illness, and can sweep across the country and around the world in a very short time. For more information, including Indiana's Pandemic Influenza Plan, visit the Indiana State Department of Health's pandemic influenza Web site.

Seasonal Influenza

Seasonal influenza is a viral infection of the breathing tubes and lungs, but also has symptoms of sore throat, muscle aches, headache, and feeling generally ill. Anyone can become infected, but the elderly and young children, or anyone with certain health problems may become seriously ill or die from the flu or its complications. The best protection is to get vaccinated against the flu every year before the flu season starts. Each year the vaccine contains the types of flu virus expected to cause illness in the coming year. The vaccine begins to protect you after two weeks. For more information on influenza, visit the Indiana State Department of Health's influenza Web site.

How to Prepare for Pandemic Flu

- Get accurate information
- Develop a plan with your family
- Consult with your doctor
- Check with your employer about your company's plan
- Stay home if you are ill

Family plan: Stock up!

Food, water, and medications
- Stock up on non-perishable food items and water. The virus will not affect the water, but there may not be enough people working at the water company to keep up with repairs and maintenance. Stock up on food in case grocery store suppliers don't deliver on time or in case you are ill and should not be going out.

Diapers and formula for babies
- 4-week supply

Check on elderly and homebound neighbors
- People who cannot get out and plan ahead may need your help. They may be sick and home alone and you could get food for them.

School assignments and games for children
- Have some new toys or games stashed away to bring out during the long stay home.

Pet supplies

If pandemic flu hits, stay home. . .
- If you are ill or have ill family members
- If you are especially vulnerable to infections
- Do not attend large group gatherings, including sporting events, religious gatherings, shopping, concerts, etc.

Medical needs

Anyone with a chronic condition (emphysema, heart disease, asthma, multiple sclerosis, etc.) needs to plan with their doctor now the best management plan for them during a pandemic. Decide when to call the doctor, whether or not to stay home from the beginning, and how to make sure you will have enough medication to last several weeks.

Endemic, Epidemic and Pandemic

According to the Columbia Guide to Standard American English, something **endemic** is native to a particular place or always to be found in a particular region, as are some plants or trees or certain pathological conditions that neither increase nor decrease but are simply always present there.

Something **epidemic** is prevalent and spreading rapidly in a particular region or community, as might a contagious disease; something **pandemic** is omnipresent, spread over a huge area, to be found everywhere. For example, malnutrition is *pandemic* in the Horn of Africa, but this season starvation is *epidemic* there as well.

According to the World Health Organization, a pandemic can start when three conditions have been met:

- *The emergence of a disease new to the population*
- *The agent infects humans, causing serious illness*
- *The agent spreads easily and sustainably among humans*

A disease or condition is not a pandemic merely because it is widespread or kills a large number of people; it must also be infectious. For example cancer is responsible for a large number of deaths but is not considered a pandemic because the disease is not infectious.