

Avian Influenza (also known as H5N1)

Avian flu is a virus that spreads fast among birds and animals such as cows. People can get sick with bird flu when they have close, unprotected contact with infected animals and birds.

How does the H5N1 virus spread?

- Droplets or particles from an infected animal's feces, raw milk, and saliva can contain the virus.
- Workers who handle raw milk from an infected cow, care for sick animals, and or clean their living areas are most exposed to the virus.
- The virus can enter through a person's eyes, nose, and mouth, including through breathing.



What symptoms should I watch for?

- Eye tearing, pink eye, redness or irritation
- Fever (100° F or higher)
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Difficulty breathing/shortness of breath
- Headaches
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Diarrhea



If I work with sick animals, how can I protect myself?

Wear recommended personal protective equipment (PPE) provided by your employer when working directly or closely with sick or dead animals, animal feces, litter, raw milk, and other materials that might have the virus. Wash hands with soap and water, then put on PPE in this order:

1. Coveralls
2. Waterproof apron
3. N95 mask or half mask respirator
4. Properly-fitted safety goggles or face shield
5. Head cover or hair cover
6. Gloves
7. Boots



How can I protect myself and my family?

- Wash your hands with soap and water throughout the day.
- Don't take home raw milk, drink raw milk or feed it to pets.
- Get a seasonal flu vaccine.

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What can I do if my family or I are exposed to sick animals and feel sick?

- **Stay Home:** Do not report to work if you are experiencing symptoms. Follow medical advice and stay home until cleared by a healthcare provider.
- **Isolate from Others:** Try to stay in a separate room and use a separate bathroom, if possible, to minimize contact with family members or housemates.
- **Wear a mask:** If you need to be around other people (e.g., visiting a healthcare provider), wear a mask to prevent the spread.
- **Clean and disinfect frequently:** Regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as doorknobs, light switches, and phones.
- **Monitor your symptoms:** Seek medical attention if your symptoms worsen or if you have underlying health conditions that increase your risk of complications.

What can I expect if my family and I get sick?

You will be contacted by someone from your local health department to enroll you in a follow up program for health checks. Please answer the call and follow their directions. The directions will keep you and your family healthy and safe.

For more information, visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/bird-flu/index.html> (scan the QR code), or call: (559) 600-3332.

