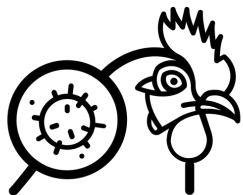


Fact Sheet

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)



WHAT IS AVIAN INFLUENZA?

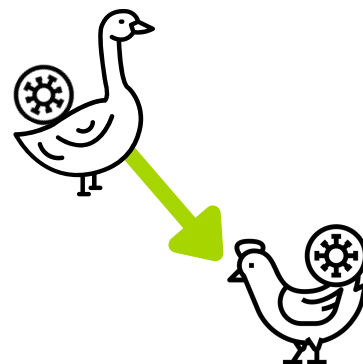
Avian influenza (AI), or “bird flu,” is a virus that infects domestic poultry, such as chickens, turkeys, and quail as well as waterfowl such as geese, ducks, and shorebirds. There are various strains of avian influenza, many of which show little or no visible signs of illness and pose no threat to public health. Each year new strains of AI may appear throughout the world.

WHAT IS HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA?

There are low pathogenic AI viruses (LPAI) that cause mild disease and others that are highly pathogenic (HPAI) that cause severe symptoms in avian wildlife, including death. Under some circumstances, a LPAI virus can mutate to become HPAI. Avian influenza can make domesticated birds such as chickens and turkeys very sick and may ultimately lead to high mortality.

HOW DOES AVIAN INFLUENZA SPREAD?

HPAI spreads quickly by direct, bird-to-bird contact. The disease can also spread indirectly, for example, when birds come in contact with contaminated surfaces or materials. Because the virus is not highly pathogenic to migratory waterfowl, they end up acting as carriers for the virus and can allow it to travel vast distances. When wild birds fly south for the winter months, their migratory pathways take them over much of the United States; they can deposit the virus along the way, contaminating the environment and infecting commercial, backyard and recreational flocks.



CAN HUMANS CONTRACT AVIAN INFLUENZA?

People rarely get bird flu, but when they do, it's most often through direct unprotected contact (no gloves, protective wear, face masks, respirators or eye protection) with infected birds. People can become infected by breathing virus in droplets in the air or possibly dust, or by touching surfaces contaminated with infected bird mucous, saliva or feces and then touching their eyes, mouth or nose.

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WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF AVIAN INFLUENZA IN HUMANS?

The reported signs and symptoms in humans have ranged from no symptoms or mild illness (such as eye redness or mild flu-like upper respiratory symptoms), to severe (such as pneumonia requiring hospitalization) and included fever or feeling feverish, cough, sore throat, runny/stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches, fatigue, and shortness of breath or difficulty breathing.

CAN SOMEONE CONTRACT AVIAN INFLUENZA FROM EATING POULTRY MEAT OR EGGS?

All commercial poultry flocks in the U.S. are tested for avian influenza virus, and meat or egg products from infected flocks are prohibited from entering the market. Furthermore, eating poultry that has been prepared properly is safe. Cooking poultry products to an internal temperature of 165 degrees ensures safety. Proper handling and preparation of poultry products destroys avian influenza, as well as other disease microbes.



WHAT ARE THE SPECIES OF WILD BIRDS THAT CAN CARRY HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA BUT NOT DIE FROM IT?

Some wild aquatic birds such as gulls, terns, shorebirds, and waterfowl (ducks, geese, swans) are carriers of the avian influenza virus and generally will not exhibit clinical signs when infected. These species are considered reservoirs for avian influenza viruses. Most other birds can become infected, shed the virus, and display clinical symptoms or even death. Poultry and game birds can be easily become infected.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF HPAI IN POULTRY?

- Sudden increase in bird mortality
- Sudden, severe drop in egg production, laying soft-shell or misshapen eggs
- Swelling around the eyes, neck and head
- Sudden, severe drop in feed and water consumption
- Lethargy
- Nasal discharge, coughing, sneezing
- Purple discoloration of wattles, combs and legs
- Watery or green diarrhea
- Lack of coordination or paralysis
- Twisting of the head/neck

WHAT SHOULD PEOPLE DO IF THEY FIND A DEAD WILD BIRD?

If the cause of death is unknown, contact Long Beach Animal Care Services by calling **(562) 570-7387** or through the **Go Long Beach** app.

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WHAT MEASURES CAN BE TAKEN TO PREVENT A POULTRY FLOCK FROM CONTRACTING AVIAN INFLUENZA?

Prevention protects the health of poultry and other domestic birds, since there is no acceptable or practical treatment once birds have contracted HPAI. Follow these basic biosecurity prevention measures to help keep your small flock healthy:

- **Monitor your flock's health.** Know the signs of disease and check your flock daily for any signs of illness. Contact your local veterinarian for guidance on sick individual birds.
- **Prevent contact between your flock and wild birds, particularly waterfowl.** Remove bird feeders to discourage visits from wild birds. Do not come into direct contact with your flocks if you have seen birds in another country or have been in contact with any other birds, including their feathers or waste.
- **Keep it clean.** Regularly clean and disinfect poultry houses, coops and other enclosures. Use dedicated footwear and clothing when entering any bird area, and a dry or liquid footbath to disinfect shoes prior to entry.
- **Protect your flock's food and water supply.** Make sure wild birds, rodents, and other pests can't access them.
- **Report sick birds.** If your birds are sick or dying, please contact Long Beach Communicable Disease Surveillance and Control (CDSC) Division at (562) 570-4302 or vph@longbeach.gov.

WHAT SHOULD SOMEONE DO IF THEIR FLOCK IS EXPERIENCING HIGH MORTALITY OR EXHIBITING SYMPTOMS OF AVIAN INFLUENZA?

Anyone with poultry that are exhibiting signs of HPAI should contact the Long Beach CDSC at vph@longbeach.gov or (562) 570-4302. This is particularly important with backyard flocks that have contact with wild aquatic birds or are exhibiting high mortality, depression, and severe decrease in egg production.

WHAT IS THE BEST METHOD FOR BACKYARD FLOCK OWNERS TO DISPOSE OF DEAD BIRDS INFECTED WITH AVIAN INFLUENZA?

If avian influenza is suspected, please contact Long Beach Animal Care Services by calling (562) 570-7387 or through the Go Long Beach app before anything is done with the dead birds. **Reporting is critical** to the success of the response and control of this virus.

