

Commonly Asked Questions from Consumers Related to **BIRD FLU (H5N1)**

What is bird flu (influenza H5N1)?

Bird flu is caused by the H5N1 subtype of Influenza A virus. Among migratory birds and poultry, this virus is highly contagious and can cause severe illness and death. Variants of this virus can cause infections in dairy cows and other animals and can cause severe illness in cats. Rarely, it can infect humans.

How can I stay informed about bird flu outbreaks?

Regularly check trusted sources such as the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), or local health departments for updates and recommendations.

How do people get bird flu, and is it dangerous for humans?

Humans usually get bird flu through direct exposure to infected animals or environments contaminated with the virus. Though human illnesses are rare and most infections in the U.S. to date have been mild, they can be severe.

Can bird flu be transmitted to humans?

Human infections are rare but can occur with close exposure to infected birds or animals or environments contaminated with the virus. Risk to the general public is low.

Are eggs safe to consume?

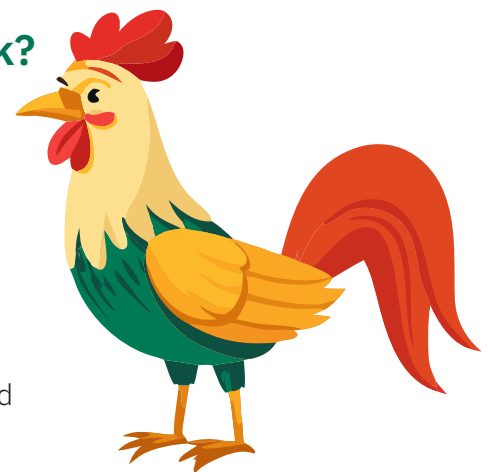
Yes, eggs (both backyard and store-bought) are safe if properly cooked until yolks and whites are firm, if food containing eggs is cooked to an internal temperature of 160°F, or if pasteurized egg products are used.

Can I safely eat poultry during a bird flu outbreak?

Yes. Poultry and poultry products are safe to consume if cooked thoroughly to an internal temperature of at least 165°F (74°C).

What precautions should I take when handling raw poultry products?

Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water, disinfect surfaces and utensils, and avoid cross-contamination by keeping raw poultry separate from other foods. Raw poultry-based foods are not recommended for pets.



For more information

piecenter.com | sccaahs.org

Defend the Flock: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/avian/defend-the-flock>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/bird-flu/> | <https://www.cdc.gov/bird-flu/about/>

United States Department of Agriculture: <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/food-safety/safe-food-handling-and-preparation/eggs/shell-eggs-farm-table#>

Is milk being tested for bird flu?

The USDA has recently implemented a bulk milk testing program for states where influenza H5N1 outbreaks have occurred. Other states also have begun similar voluntarily testing programs. More information available at: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/avian/avian-influenza/hpai-livestock>

Is milk in the grocery store safe to drink?

Yes, milk sold for human consumption has been tested and pasteurized. Pasteurization is effective at killing bird flu and many other pathogens.

Is raw milk safe to drink or feed to pets?

No. Raw milk that contains H5N1 can cause infection, including severe infections that can be fatal to cats. Raw milk can also have dangerous bacteria like Salmonella or E. coli. Pasteurized milk is recommended to ensure safety.

Do wild birds carry bird flu to farms?

Yes, wild migratory birds can carry and spread bird flu viruses, including influenza H5N1, to domestic poultry and livestock.

Do other animals get bird flu? How are they affected?

Yes, cats, dogs, and other mammals can be infected through direct contact with the flu virus. Symptoms range from mild respiratory signs to severe and potentially fatal neurological illness.

What should I do if I find a dead bird?

Do not touch or handle dead birds directly. Contact local wildlife officials to report sick or dead wild birds and agricultural authorities to report sick or dead domestic birds.

Contact Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC):
<https://app.myfwc.com/FWRI/AvianMortality/>

Is there a vaccine for bird flu (for birds, cows, people, etc.)?

Currently, vaccines for bird flu are being developed for poultry, cows, and humans but are not yet available for use.

