



Protect Yourself from Avian Flu:

Bird Handlers/Workers

Avian flu is a viral disease which can be very contagious and even deadly in poultry (e.g., chickens). Of great concern are the highly pathogenic avian influenza H5N1 viruses that have killed millions of birds and have infected humans in other countries. If these viruses are found in Canada, take appropriate precautions if you are involved in poultry destruction.

Signs of avian flu illness in birds

Sudden death; lack of energy, appetite and coordination; purple discolouration and/or swelling of various body parts; diarrhea; nasal discharge; coughing; sneezing; and reduced egg production and/or soft-shelled or misshapen eggs.

Avian flu symptoms in humans

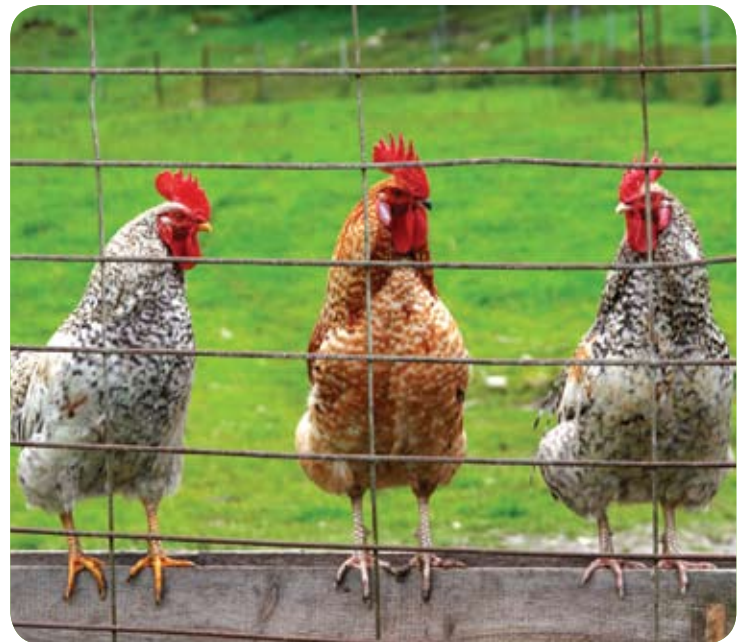
Range from fever, cough, sore throat and muscle aches to diarrhea, eye infections, pneumonia and severe respiratory diseases. The symptoms may depend on which virus caused the infection, but are often similar to those of human seasonal influenza.

When engaged in eradication activities:

- Clean your hands often and thoroughly, preferably using soap and warm water for 15 to 20 seconds (or waterless, alcohol-based hand rub when soap and water is not available), especially if you are handling poultry or poultry products.
- Wear lightweight, disposable gloves or heavy-duty rubber work gloves that can be disinfected. Avoid touching your face with gloved hands.
- Wear disposable shoe covers or boots that can be cleaned and disinfected.
- Wear safety goggles and disposable head or hair cover.
- Wear at least the minimum level of respiratory protection, N95 or higher respirator.
- Avoid eating, drinking, smoking and bathroom use while wearing personal protective equipment (PPE).

Additional guidance

- Get the seasonal flu vaccine.
- Have your health care provider prescribe an adequate supply of antivirals during poultry destruction activities and for five days after it ends.
- If you develop flu-like symptoms, stay at home except to get medical attention.



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