

# **Avian Influenza A (H7N9) Key Points**

**February 13, 2014**

## **H7N9 Infection Reported in Malaysia**

- The Malaysian Ministry of Health has reported a human infection with avian influenza A (H7N9) or "H7N9".
- Human infections with a new H7N9 virus were first reported in China in March 2013. Since that time, 337 cases had been detected in China as of February 11, 2014.
- No evidence of sustained, ongoing person-to-person spread of H7N9 has been found.
- Most H7N9 infections are believed to result from exposure to infected poultry or contaminated environments. (H7N9 viruses have been found in poultry in China.)
- The H7N9 case detected in Malaysia is reportedly in traveler from an area of China already affected by H7N9.
- This is the first case of H7N9 detected outside of China.
- However, since this case reportedly occurred in a traveler from China who had developed symptoms before traveling, this would be considered an imported case of H7N9.
- H7N9 has not been detected in poultry in Malaysia at this time.
- CDC has predicted for some time that one or more human cases of H7N9 would be detected outside of China; including the scenario where a case was detected in a traveler from China.
- The detection of H7N9 in a traveler from China to Malaysia does not change the risk assessment for this virus.
- The most important factor in the public health risk assessment is the transmissibility of the virus.
- There is no evidence of sustained, ongoing person-to-person spread of H7N9.
- The detection of H7N9 in Malaysia in a traveler from China underscores the importance of international surveillance for H7N9 and other influenza viruses with pandemic potential.
- H7N9 continues to pose an important public health threat.
- H7N9 human infections associated with poultry exposure will most likely continue to occur in China.
- H7N9 also may spread to poultry in neighboring countries and human cases associated with poultry exposure also may be detected in those neighboring countries.
- The new H7N9 virus has not been detected in people or birds in the United States.

## **H7N9 Infection Reported in Malaysia**

February 13, 2014

- However, H7N9 also may be detected in the United States at some point, probably in a traveler from an affected area.
- Most concerning about this situation is the pandemic potential of this virus.
- Influenza viruses constantly change and it's possible that this virus could gain the ability to spread easily and sustainably among people, triggering a global outbreak of disease (pandemic).
- CDC is following this situation closely and coordinating with domestic and international partners.
- The U.S. Government has been providing funding to support international surveillance for H7N9 and other influenza viruses with pandemic potential.
- CDC takes routine preparedness actions whenever a new virus with pandemic potential is identified, including developing a candidate vaccine virus to make a vaccine in case vaccine is needed.
- Those preparedness measures continue.
- CDC also has issued guidance to clinicians and public health authorities in the United States, as well as provided information for people traveling to China.
- CDC will provide updated information as it becomes available.
- More information is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/h7n9-virus.htm>.
- A CDC Flu Spotlight about this case is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/news/h7n9-case-malaysia.htm>.
- More information also is available on the World Health Organization website at [http://www.who.int/influenza/human\\_animal\\_interface/influenza\\_h7n9/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/influenza/human_animal_interface/influenza_h7n9/en/index.html).