

Avian Influenza: CDC Health Advisory Key Points

Bird Infections with Highly-Pathogenic Avian Influenza A (H5N2), (H5N8), and (H5N1) Viruses: Recommendations for Human Health Investigations and Response

- On Tuesday, June 2, 2015, CDC issued a Health Alert Network (HAN) Advisory regarding U.S. bird infections with highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) A (H5N2), (H5N8) and (H5N1) viruses. This HAN was released to raise awareness among U.S. clinicians and public health staff about CDC's recommendations to protect human health during what has become the largest outbreak of bird flu in U.S. history.
 - To date, there have not been any human cases of HPAI H5 virus infection in the U.S. and the risk of human infection is low. However, since HPAI H5 viruses circulating in poultry and other birds in the U.S. are similar to HPAI H5 viruses that have infected people in other countries, resulting in severe pneumonia and death, precautions should be taken by persons who might be exposed to infected birds, sick birds, poultry carcasses, and poultry feces or litter.
 - The HAN is available at <http://emergency.cdc.gov/han/han00378.asp>.
- This HAN Advisory provides an overview of the current HPAI H5 situation among poultry and other birds in the United States and describes CDC's existing recommendations for human health investigations and the human health response.
 - Topics covered by the HAN include:
 - people at highest risk of HPAI H5 virus infection,
 - recommendations for surveillance and testing,
 - recommendations for worker protection,
 - recommendations for infection control,
 - recommendations for flu antiviral treatment and chemoprophylaxis (i.e., preventative use), and
 - an update on the efforts underway to make a human vaccine against these H5 viruses.
- CDC is posting regular updates and the latest guidance documents related to the U.S. HPAI H5 response on its website at <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/h5/index.htm>.
- The worker protection and personal protective equipment (PPE) guidance included in the HAN is consistent with prior OSHA and NIOSH guidance and was reviewed and updated collaboratively with these organizations in the context of the current HPAI H5 poultry outbreaks.

HPAI H5 Recommendations for Worker Protection

- To reduce their risk of HPAI H5 virus infection, poultry workers and responders should do all of the following:
 - Avoid unprotected direct physical contact with sick birds, poultry carcasses, and poultry feces or litter.

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- Wear recommended personal protective equipment (PPE) when in direct contact with birds, poultry carcasses, and poultry feces or litter, AND when going into any buildings with sick or dead poultry, or carcasses, feces, or litter from potentially-infected poultry.
 - Recommended PPE includes: properly fitted safety goggles, disposable gloves, boots, a NIOSH-certified respirator (e.g., N95), and disposable fluid-resistant coveralls.
- NIOSH-certified N95 (or higher) respirators are recommended for workers who have contact with HPAI H5 virus-infected birds, carcasses or potentially infected materials.