



Bird flu toolkit

What is bird flu

- Bird flu is caused by some strains of influenza A.
- Any bird can be infected.
- Wild birds can carry it without getting sick.
- Some strains can spread easily from wild birds to poultry. The poultry can get very sick and die.
- Australian farms have had bird flu outbreaks.
- Bird flu has spread to other animals overseas, including cattle, goats, cats and foxes.

Bird flu rarely infects people, but it can happen, especially during animal outbreaks.

Getting a seasonal flu vaccine every year can help prevent bird flu becoming a bigger threat to people.

How bird flu spreads to people

Some bird flu strains spread from animals to people, but this is rare.

This could come from:

- wild birds
- poultry farms
- livestock
- backyard birds
- wild mammals.

How bird flu infects people

You can be infected by:

- touching infected animals without personal protective equipment (PPE)
- touching something with the virus on it, then touching your eyes, nose or mouth
- breathing in dust or droplets that contain the virus
- having liquid with the virus in it splash into your eyes, nose or mouth.

Symptoms of bird flu in people

Most people have mild or no symptoms. Some people get very sick and need to go to hospital.

Symptoms include:

- fever (temperature of 38°C or over), chills or shakes
- sore throat
- cough
- runny nose
- difficulty breathing (shortness of breath)
- headache or muscle aches and pains
- diarrhoea
- nausea or vomiting
- red, sore eyes (conjunctivitis).

If you feel sick *and* have been in contact with an infected animal, their materials or environments:

- seek medical advice – Call your doctor to say you have been around infected animals
- tell your employer
- **stay away** from others (until you talk to a doctor) – if you can't do this, wear a mask.

People most at risk of catching bird flu

Those most at risk of catching bird flu include:

- people who work with poultry
- people who work with poultry products
- bird flu outbreak responders
- bird handlers
- wildlife workers and carers
- hobby farmers
- backyard poultry owners.

Protecting yourself from bird flu when working with birds

Bird flu can make you sick. These actions can protect you:

- Don't touch birds, unless you have to.
- Wash hands thoroughly and frequently with soap and running water.
- Wear appropriate PPE.
- If you get symptoms, call your doctor to say you have been around birds.

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