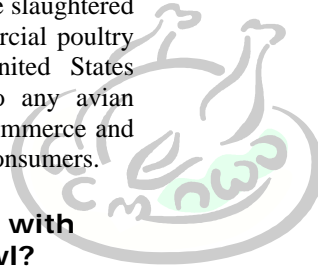


Can flu be transmitted by eating chicken?

No, as long as the chicken is cooked. Chicken should be cooked to at least 165° Fahrenheit. There are additional precautions being taken by the poultry industry. First, all flocks on Delmarva are tested before they are slaughtered and prepared for market. Commercial poultry raised by companies in the United States known to have been exposed to any avian influenza virus **will not** go into commerce and therefore **will not** be available to consumers.



Am I likely to be infected with H5N1 from wild waterfowl?

There are no known cases of human infection by Asian H5N1 from wild birds, but direct transmission from wild birds to humans cannot be excluded. Do not handle birds that are sick or found dead. Wear rubber gloves while cleaning game. Wash hands with soap and water, alcohol wipes, or hand sanitizer immediately after handling. Wash tools and work surfaces used to clean game birds with soap and water, then disinfect with a 10% solution of chlorine bleach. Separate raw meat, and anything it touches, from cooked or ready-to-eat foods. Cook game birds thoroughly; meat should reach an internal temperature of 165° Fahrenheit. Remove and launder clothes and footwear before attending to chickens to reduce the risk of mechanically spreading the virus.

Should I get a flu shot?

Yes. While there is not yet a vaccine for humans against H5N1 or other kinds of bird flu, getting the seasonal human flu vaccine is a good idea. This is because if you were infected with both bird flu and human flu, the two

viruses could mix and produce a pandemic strain. An annual flu shot will help prevent this from happening. Most health departments offer vaccination during the flu season (October through April) for little or no cost.

What about anti-viral medication?

There are medicines that can prevent or treat flu. You must get these from your doctor. Treatment with these anti-viral drugs may reduce the severity and length of flu symptoms, and shorten the time that you can spread flu to others. However, you must take the medicine within 48 hours of getting sick. So if you have flu symptoms, contact your doctor immediately.

For More Information:

Maryland
flu.maryland.gov

Delaware
Division of Public Health
www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/avianflu.html

Delaware
Department of Agriculture
denver.state.de.us/dda/dda.nsf

Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc.
www.dpichicken.com

National Website
www.avianflu.gov

Answers to Common Questions About Avian Influenza for Poultry Growers



Developed by the Delmarva Avian Influenza Joint Task Force
May 2006

What is the concern about a flu pandemic?

An epidemic that covers a wide geographic area is called a pandemic. A flu pandemic could cover many countries or even be worldwide. Any new strain of flu could cause a pandemic. ***There is no pandemic now***, and no one knows when the next pandemic might occur.

Can the bird flu virus in Asia become a pandemic?

The H5N1 strain of flu virus is spreading among birds in Asia and parts of Europe. The virus has infected a small number of humans in that part of the world. Most of the victims were people who had prolonged or close contact with **infected** birds. There is little evidence that it spreads from person to person, but scientists fear that the virus could mutate (change) and cause human-to-human spread. If the virus changes, bird flu could become a serious public health threat. It could spread quickly because no one would have immunity to it. ***At this time, there is no known H5N1 flu virus in either birds or humans in the United States.***

Could a H5N1 flu pandemic originate here on Delmarva?

Without the H5N1 flu virus being brought to Delmarva, it is nearly impossible for a pandemic to originate on Delmarva. The flu virus that infected chickens in 2004 was H7N2, and is not the same strain that scientists are concerned about in Asia. H7 flu viruses have been known to infect humans, but rarely.

What about seasonal ("normal") flu?

The human flu occurring each winter in your community is not bird flu, but it can still be dangerous to some people—especially the elderly, people with chronic diseases, and young children. Most of us have some immunity to the seasonal flu, and there are vaccines available to protect us. It's a good idea to get an annual flu shot each year. Also, infected migrating or smuggled birds could find their way here. Unlike poultry in Asia, Delmarva's poultry are well protected and less likely to be infected, as long as proper biosecurity is maintained.

What is biosecurity and how will that protect my family and me?

Biosecurity is a term for efforts to protect your flock from being infected with any strain of bird flu as well as other poultry diseases. **Though the risks are small**, it is possible for you and your family to be infected with some strains of the flu viruses that infect birds. Preventing your birds from being infected in the first place makes the most sense, and that's why biosecurity efforts are so important.

Where can I get more information about biosecurity?

Your poultry company and the Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc. (DPI) can provide you with detailed information about good biosecurity. The DPI website has biosecurity information:

www.dpichicken.com

Could my birds be infected by the H5N1 flu strain?

This is possible but unlikely. Poultry on Delmarva are generally protected by rigid infection control procedures.

Are my family and I at risk because of my birds?

H5N1 has not been found in this country, so right now the answer is "no." However, it makes sense to follow proper biosecurity and infection control.

What infection control measures should I take to protect my family and me?

Routinely wear a mask and gloves when handling your flocks, or their feces and feathers. When finished, wash your hands and change out of work clothes and footwear when leaving the work area. Launder your work clothes frequently.

How will testing my flock protect my family and me?

Biosecurity is not 100% perfect. Monitoring your flocks is critical to detect bird flu so that immediate action can be taken. If bird flu is found in your flocks, there are measures you can take to reduce the already low risk that you and your family may become infected.

