

## KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS OF AVIAN FLU IN BIRDS

This brochure represents United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) guidance that has been adapted for the DoD beneficiary population. Additional information can be found at [www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usdahome](http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usdahome). Click on the AI link. Early detection is key to preventing the spread of disease. Whether you own pet birds, are a farmer or avid bird watcher, or live near a pond or golf course with ducks or wild geese, you can play an important role in protecting everyone's health.

Some of the warning signs of avian flu in birds are:

- Sudden increase in bird deaths in flocks
- Sneezing, coughing, gasping for air, and nasal discharge
- Watery and green fecal matter
- Lack of energy and poor appetite
- Drop in egg production or soft- or thin-shelled misshapen eggs
- Swelling around the eyes, neck, and head
- Purple discoloration of the wattles, combs, and legs
- Tremors, drooping wings, circling, twisting of the head and neck, or lack of movement.

If you see these signs of avian flu in birds near you, don't wait. Contact your local health officials or the U.S. Department of Agriculture at 1-866-536-7593 and report sick or dying birds.



## KNOWING THE FACTS IS THE BEST PREPARATION

Identify sources you can count on for reliable information. Having accurate and reliable information is critical and will help you make good health decisions for yourself and your family.

You can visit [www.pandemicflu.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.gov) to get information on pandemic influenza and also [www.dod.mil/pandemicflu](http://www.dod.mil/pandemicflu) for information specific to servicemembers and their families. In addition, servicemembers and their families who have concerns about avian influenza can get additional information by calling the Office of Force Health Protection and Readiness toll-free at 1-800-497-6261, Monday to Friday, 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM Eastern Standard Time.

If you have birds or poultry and are concerned about their health, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) operates a toll-free hotline (1-866-536-7593) with veterinarians available to help you. There is no charge for this service.

Another source for information on avian influenza is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Hotline at: 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-866-232-4636). This line is available in English and Spanish, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. TTY: 1-888-232-6348. Questions can be e-mailed to [cdcinfo@cdc.gov](mailto:cdcinfo@cdc.gov).



Force Health Protection & Readiness  
*Safeguarding the health of those who protect us*  
As of 3 January 2007



# Dealing with Birds and Poultry

## *A Guide for Service Members and Families*

# AVIAN FLU



Avian flu, also known as bird flu, is now in the United States. At this time it continues to be primarily a disease affecting birds and NOT people. However, there are a number of simple measures that you can take to minimize your risk of catching bird flu.

*Do:*

- Eat only USDA inspected poultry and eggs
- Eat poultry that is fully cooked (internal temperature of 185 degrees F or no pink meat)
- Wash your hands before and after handling raw poultry
- Wash surfaces after contact with raw poultry
- Eat only cooked eggs
- Avoid contact with sick or dead birds

*Don't:*

- Eat wild birds
- Eat poultry or eggs that have not been inspected by the USDA
- Eat poultry that is not fully cooked
- Touch sick or dead birds
- Slaughter your own poultry



People can catch avian flu by coming in contact with birds that are dead, dying or alive but infected with avian flu. Birds infected with avian flu have virus throughout their bodies as well as in their saliva, droppings and eggs. Avian flu can live in dead birds or bird droppings for over a month. Refrigeration or freezing does not kill the avian flu virus. The virus can also stay alive on surfaces such as knives and tabletops for several weeks.

### PROTECT YOURSELF

In order to avoid coming in contact with avian flu:

- DO NOT eat wild birds or domestic poultry or eggs that have not been approved for consumption by the USDA. USDA inspected poultry and eggs ARE SAFE to eat.
- Fully cooked poultry IS SAFE. Poultry needs to be cooked until there is no pink meat or until the internal temperature reaches 165 degrees F.
- Those preparing poultry for consumption should always wash their hands before and after handling raw poultry.

Surfaces and utensils used to prepare raw poultry should be washed following contact.

### PROTECT YOUR ANIMALS

Those with small backyard flocks of poultry for personal consumption should not slaughter or eat these birds until authorities have declared it is safe to do so. Avoid coming in contact with wild geese or ducks on ponds, in parks, and on golf courses near homes or quarters. The appearance of sick or dead birds should be promptly reported to local health authorities.

Although most domestic poultry will become ill shortly after developing avian flu, some may appear well but still have the ability to cause an infection. This is especially true for wild birds such as ducks, geese, and swans.

Pet bird owners should keep their birds indoors and avoid contact with wild bird species.

Some other household pets could contract avian flu. The disease has been found in cats and ferrets. Pet owners should restrict their cat's and ferret's outdoor access, keep them away from wild birds, and avoid feeding them raw poultry.

