

Health Advice on Prevention of Avian Influenza for the General Public

Avian influenza

Avian influenza (H5N1) is a type of influenza A that mainly infects birds but occasionally affects humans. Avian influenza can be transmitted from birds to people, although transmission between humans, up to this moment, is very inefficient. The initial symptoms of avian flu are similar to those of other influenza viruses, including fever, generalised muscle pain, cough and sore throat. However, it is more likely to result in high fever, chest infection, respiratory failure, multi-organ failure, and death.

Health Advice for the general public

- Avoid direct contact with birds and poultry
 - Avoid touching poultry, birds or their droppings, because they may carry the avian influenza virus.
 - Wash your hands thoroughly with liquid soap and water immediately if you have been in contact with poultry, birds or their droppings.
- Maintain good personal hygiene
 - Keep hands clean and wash hands properly.
 - Cover nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing. Dispose sputum or secretions wrapped in tissue paper into rubbish bins with lids. Wash hands with liquid soap and water afterwards.
- Build up good body resistance and have a healthy lifestyle. This can be achieved through a balanced diet, regular exercise, adequate rest, reducing stress and no smoking.
- Poultry and eggs should be thoroughly cooked before eating.
- Maintain good environmental hygiene
 - Maintain good indoor ventilation.
 - Avoid crowded places with poor ventilation if you are feeling unwell.
- If you have symptoms of respiratory infection, wear a mask and consult a doctor promptly.

For more information

Please visit the website of the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health at www.chp.gov.hk or call the Department of Health's 24-hour Health Education Hotline at 2833 0111.

Centre for Health Protection

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