

**West Kentucky Community & Technical College  
Avian Flu Prevention Handbook**

**January 2017**



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**Coming to grips with the uncertainty about the spread of the avian flu and the potential risk it could pose is a challenge for college and university administrators. Kentucky government officials are planning for the possibility of an avian flu pandemic. The state has been assigned lead responsibility for developing guidelines and planning protocols, and state agencies are working on their pandemic planning.**

**The Kentucky Community and Technical College System has begun a planning effort with a goal of having a system plan and each college is expected to have a plan in place. West Kentucky Community and Technical College has developed the following information to help you and answer any questions you may have.**

## **Overview**

### **What Is Avian Flu?**

Avian Flu is a virus that occurs naturally among birds, which is why it is often referred to as “bird flu.” Wild birds worldwide carry the viruses in their intestines and usually do not get sick from them; however, it appears that a new type of avian flu virus does cause disease and death in migratory wild birds.

Avian Flu was first recorded in Italy more than 100 years ago in 1878. As the cause of massive poultry epidemics, this disease was then known as “Fowl Plague”. It came to the United States in 1924-25, and then again in 1929.

Humans can be infected with influenza types A, B, and C viruses, but type A is the most common type to produce serious epidemics in humans—and the only type that affects domestic animals (equine, swine, avian). Influenza type A viruses are categorized by the letter’s H and N—depending on the specific types of proteins on their surface.

The current bird flu in the news is called avian influenza H5N1. There have been a few suspected cases of human-to-human transmission in Asia, but the bird flu is still spread predominately from infected poultry to people.

### **Where Does Avian Flu Come From?**

Outbreaks of avian influenza H5N1 occurred among poultry in eight countries in Asia (Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, South Korea, Thailand, and Vietnam) during late 2003 and early 2004. At that time, more than 100 million birds in the affected countries either died from the disease or were killed in order to try to control the outbreaks. By March 2004, the outbreak was reported to be under control. Since late June 2004, however, new outbreaks of influenza H5N1 among poultry were reported by several countries in Asia (Cambodia, China [Tibet], Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Russia [Siberia], Thailand, and Vietnam)—as well as Turkey, Romania, and Ukraine. Outbreaks of influenza H5N1 have also been reported among wild migratory

birds in China, Croatia, Mongolia, and Romania. As of July 14, 2006, the World Health Organization (WHO) has reported over 230 human cases globally.

### **How Does Avian Flu Spread?**

Avian influenza is very contagious among birds and can make some domesticated birds, including chickens, ducks, and turkeys, very sick and kill them. Infected birds pass the influenza virus through their saliva, nasal secretions, and feces, so susceptible birds become infected when they have contact with contaminated secretions or excretions. So far, the spread of H5N1 virus from person to person has been limited and has not continued beyond one person. Nonetheless, because all influenza viruses have the ability to change, scientists are concerned that the H5N1 virus will one day be able to infect humans and spread easily from one person to another. Because these viruses do not commonly infect humans, there is little or no immune protection against them in the human population. If H5N1 virus were to gain the capacity to spread easily from person to person, an influenza pandemic (worldwide outbreak of disease) could begin.

Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/h5n1-threat.htm>

### **Signs & Symptoms**

#### **What Are the Symptoms of Avian Flu?**

The reported symptoms of avian influenza in humans range from:

- typical flu-like symptoms
- fever
- cough
- sore throat
- muscle aches
- eye infections (conjunctivitis)
- pneumonia,
- acute respiratory distress
- other severe and life-threatening complications

Unlike seasonal influenza, in which infection usually causes only mild respiratory symptoms in most people, avian flu infection may follow an unusually rapid onset with rapid deterioration (1-3 days), and **high fatality**. Primary viral pneumonia and multi-organ failure have been common among people who have become ill with avian influenza.

## **Prevention**

### **Stop the Spread of Germs that Make You and Others Sick!**

**Serious respiratory illnesses like the flu are spread by:**

- **Coughing or sneezing**
- **Unclean hands**

**To help stop the spread of germs:**

- **Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.**
- **If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.**
- **Put your used tissue in the wastebasket.**
- **Clean your hands after coughing or sneezing.**
- **Wash with soap and water. Like Mom said, Wash your hands! Simple as it is, this is the most effective preventative measure against all viruses, not just those of the avian flu variety. Use soap and scrub for at least 20 seconds and dry them completely with--especially in public places--a disposable paper towel.**
- **Clean with alcohol-based hand cleaner.**
- **Watch the face, watch the face! Most viruses enter the body through your eyes, nose and mouth. Unless you've just washed your hands, avoid touching your face as much as is practical.**
- **Don't walk out that door! OK, so we can't stay locked up at home all the time, but it's wise not to travel to areas where bird flu has been detected.**
- **Eat your veggies. Keep a healthy diet. Drink plenty of water. Exercise, get enough sleep. You know all those things that are good for your health any time. These all keep our immune systems strong and resistant to viruses.**
- **Anti-viral medications, such as Tamiflu, Relenza, Amantadine, Rimantadine, may help create a barrier to the spread of flu viruses, though some strains of bird flu virus have proven resistant to them.**
- **Avoid crowds! In the event of an Avian flu pandemic, certain public health measures may be important to help contain or limit the spread of infection as effectively as possible. The following actions could include:**

- isolating sick people in hospitals, homes, or other facilities;
- identifying and quarantining exposed people;
- closing schools and workplaces as needed;
- canceling public events; and
- restricting travel.

Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/prevention.htm>

### **What about missing work or school?**

What symptoms should keep me at home?

- You have a fever of any kind — you could be contagious.
- You are suffering from achy joints.
- You have a persistent cough accompanied by green mucus buildup and a runny nose.
- You have a severe sore throat.
- You are throwing up.
- Your eyes are bright red and have a discharge.
- After you have called in sick, it might not be a bad idea to call your doctor.

What symptoms are normally OK to go to work with?

- You are sniffing, but don't have a fever. You could have allergies.
- Your throat tickles or you have postnasal drip.
- Your ear aches.
- You have a sinus infection.
- You have a dry cough with little or no mucus.
- If you are recovering and are no longer contagious — and feel up to it — you should be able to go to work, as long as you do your best to avoid contact with others. You should also tell your colleagues that you are getting over an illness, but no longer pose a threat to their good health.

What should I do if my co-worker is exhibiting symptoms, but insists on coming to work?

- Avoid direct contact with your co-worker.
- Do not use their telephone or workstation.
- Wash your hands frequently or use a hand sanitizer.
- See whether you can move to another workstation temporarily.
- Complain to your supervisor.
- What can I do to avoid getting sick at work?

- **Germs love your hands and they will easily there if you touch a contaminated surface — like a telephone, desk or someone else's hands. People tend to sneeze or cough into their hands. They will eventually touch other things — like your hands.**
- **If someone has a cold, don't shake hands with him or her or kiss them.**
- **Wash your hands frequently, employing proper hand washing techniques (plenty of soap and warm water, rubbing your hands together vigorously for at least 20 seconds).**
- **Avoid surfaces that may be contaminated — such as in washrooms, close to where other people might wash their hands but not quite as well as you do.**
- **Use a hand sanitizer.**
- **If you have not washed your hands or sanitized after touching a surface you are not certain about, avoid touching any part of your face.**

## **Other Preventative Measures**

### **Should I wear a surgical mask to prevent exposure to avian influenza?**

Currently, wearing a mask is not recommended for routine use (e.g., in public) for preventing influenza exposure. In the United States, disposable surgical and procedure masks have been widely used in health-care settings to prevent exposure to respiratory infections, but the masks have not been used commonly in community settings, such as schools, businesses, and public gatherings.

### **Can I get avian influenza from eating or preparing poultry or eggs?**

You cannot get avian influenza from properly handled and cooked poultry and eggs. There currently is no scientific evidence that people have been infected with bird flu by eating safely handled and properly cooked poultry or eggs.

Most cases of avian influenza infection in humans have resulted from direct or close contact with infected poultry or surfaces contaminated with secretions and excretions from infected birds. Even if poultry and eggs were to be contaminated with the virus, proper cooking would kill it. In fact, recent studies have shown that the cooking methods that are already recommended by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for poultry and eggs to prevent other infections will destroy influenza viruses as well.

Therefore, to stay safe, the advice is the same for protecting against any infection from poultry:

- **Wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds before and after handling raw poultry and eggs.**
- **Clean cutting boards and other utensils with soap and hot water to keep raw poultry from contaminating other foods.**

- Use a food thermometer to make sure you cook poultry to a temperature of at least 165 degrees Fahrenheit Consumers may wish to cook poultry to a higher temperature for personal preference.
- Cook eggs until whites and yolks are firm.
- The U.S. government carefully controls domestic and imported food products, and in 2004 issued a ban on importation of poultry from countries affected by avian influenza viruses. This ban still is in place.

Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/gen-info/qa.htm>

### **Guidelines for Good Hand washing**

**Hand washing, when done correctly, is an important personal hygiene practice to prevent contracting and spreading communicable diseases.**

**When should we wash our hands?**

- Before touching the eyes, nose and mouth
- Before eating or handling food
- After using the toilet
- When hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions, e.g. after coughing or sneezing
- After touching public installations or equipment, such as escalator handrails, elevator control panels or door knobs
- After changing diapers or handling soiled articles when looking after young children or the sick

**Steps for good hand washing:**

- Wet hands under running water.
- Apply liquid soap and rub hands together to make a soapy lather.
- Away from the running water, rub the palms, backs of hands, between fingers, backs of fingers, thumbs, fingertips and wrists. Do this for at least 20 seconds.
- Rinse hands thoroughly under running water.
- Dry hands thoroughly with a clean cotton towel, a paper towel, or a hand dryer.
- The cleaned hands should not touch the water tap directly again.
- The tap may be turned off by using the towel wrapping the faucet



**Please note:**

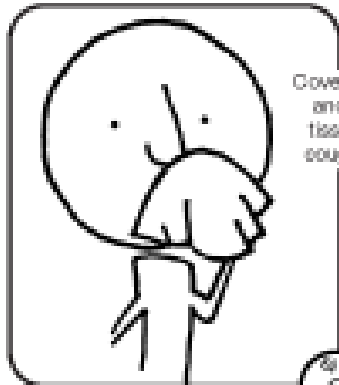
- **Towels should never be shared.**
- **Used paper towel should be properly disposed of.**
- **Personal towels to be reused must be stored properly and washed at least once daily. It is even better to have more than one towel for frequent replacement.**
- **Rub hands with a 65-95% alcohol solution to disinfect the hands when hand-washing facilities are not available.**

**Source:**

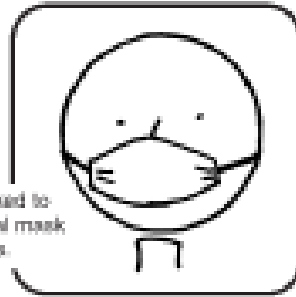
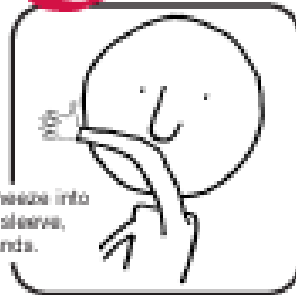
**<http://www.cdc.gov/handwashing>**

Stop the spread of germs that make you and others sick!

# Cover your Cough



Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.



You may be asked to put on a surgical mask to protect others.

Put your used tissue in the waste basket.



# Clean your Hands

after coughing or sneezing.



Wash with soap and water or clean with alcohol-based hand cleaner.



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APIC  
PRACTICE GUIDANCE



## Stopping Germs at Home, Work and School

### How Germs Spread

The main way that illnesses like colds and flu are spread is from person to person in respiratory droplets of coughs and sneezes. This is called "droplet spread." This can happen when droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person move through the air and are deposited on the mouth or nose of people nearby. Sometimes germs also can be spread when a person touches respiratory droplets from another person on a surface like a desk and then touches his or her own eyes, mouth or nose before washing their hands. We know that some viruses and bacteria can live 2 hours or longer on surfaces like cafeteria tables, doorknobs, and desks.

## How to Stop the Spread of Germs

**In a nutshell: take care to**

- **Cover your mouth and nose**
- **Clean your hands often**
- **Remind your children to practice healthy habits**

### Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing

**Cough or sneeze into a tissue and then throw it away. Cover your cough or sneeze if you do not have a tissue. Then, clean your hands, and do so every time you cough or sneeze.**

### Germs and Children

**Remind children to practice healthy habits too, because germs spread, especially at school.**



## **Additional Resources**

Several state and national sources are available to help develop avian flu plans. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is preparing a checklist for colleges and the state health department has information available on its Web site.

For more information, visit the following Web sites:

**Center for Disease Control travel information** <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/>

**U.S. government avian flu site** <http://www.flu.gov#>

**World Health Organization's avian influenza page**  
[http://www.who.int/topics/avian\\_influenza/en/](http://www.who.int/topics/avian_influenza/en/)

## **Conclusion**

The risk of contracting Avian flu is real but yet preventable. Proper hand washing and following the simple guidelines mentioned in this information will help you and your family and friends to remain healthy.