

# Avian Influenza: Staying Safe



Avian influenza, known as bird flu, is a virus that can infect birds, other animals, and sometimes humans. **The risk of humans becoming infected with avian influenza is low.**

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Indiana State Board of Animal Health (BOAH) and the Indiana Department of Health (IDOH) are working together to monitor for avian influenza and the overall risk to the public.



## How Avian Influenza Spreads

People can become infected when the avian influenza virus is inhaled or gets into a person's eyes, nose or mouth. People who have close contact with sick birds have the highest risk of becoming infected with an avian influenza virus.

## Steps to Protect Yourself:

### • Avoid Contact with Wild Birds

- Do not touch sick or dead waterfowl
- Observe wild birds and other animals from a distance. Avoid touching or feeding wild birds, even if they don't look sick
- Avoid coming into contact with bird droppings or surfaces that may contain bird droppings
- If you keep birdfeeders and birdbaths on your property, clean them regularly with a 10% bleach and hot water solution, rinse thoroughly, and then allow them to completely dry before refilling. Clean up birdseed that has fallen below birdfeeders.
- Do not feed wild birds, especially waterfowl, near domestic flocks. If you come in contact with any bird that appears unhealthy, wash your hands with soap and water and change clothing and shoes before coming in contact with a domestic flock or captive birds.

### • Backyard Flock Guidance

- Hobby poultry owners are encouraged to be aware of the signs of avian influenza and report illness and/or death to the USDA Healthy Birds Hotline: 866-536-7593. Callers will be routed to a state or federal veterinarian in Indiana for a case assessment. Dead birds should be double-bagged and refrigerated for possible testing. Keep dedicated boots/footwear in the chicken coop and don't wear them other places.

### • Report Sick or Dead Birds

- Report any cases of sick or dead wild birds to the DNR at [on.in.gov/avian-flu](http://on.in.gov/avian-flu).

### • Practice Good Hygiene

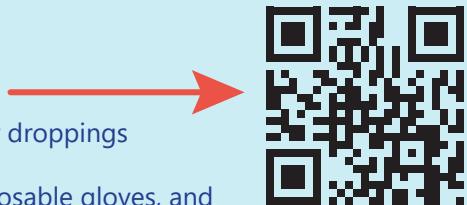
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water after any contact with birds or their droppings
- Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands
- If wild birds must be handled, protective equipment such as safety goggles, disposable gloves, and an N95 mask should be worn

### • Keep Pets Away

- Keep domestic animals, especially poultry and cats, away from wild birds and areas where wild birds congregate

### • Avian influenza does not present a food safety risk

- Cooked poultry and eggs and pasteurized dairy products are safe to eat. Pasteurization and cooking kills avian flu viruses.



## If You Develop Symptoms:

If you experience flu-like symptoms, such as fever, chills, cough, sore throat, or conjunctivitis after handling birds, contact your healthcare provider for guidance and inform them about your contact with birds.



## Online Resources:

- Indiana Department of Health - Avian Influenza: [https://www.in.gov/health/idepd/respiratory-disease/influenza/avian-influenza/#How\\_are\\_avian\\_influenza\\_viruses\\_spread](https://www.in.gov/health/idepd/respiratory-disease/influenza/avian-influenza/#How_are_avian_influenza_viruses_spread)
- DNR - Avian Flu (Bird Flu): <https://www.in.gov/dnr/fish-and-wildlife/wildlife-resources/wildlife-diseases-in-indiana/avian-flu-bird-flu/>
- Updates are available from BOAH at: <https://www.in.gov/boah/species-information/avianbirds/highly-pathogenic-avian-influenza/>