



What you need to know about H5 avian influenza (bird flu)

What is H5 bird flu?

H5 bird flu is a viral disease of birds and is found across the globe. It mainly affects birds, but can also affect other animals, and, on rare occasions, humans.

There is currently a serious and highly contagious strain, specifically H5N1, that has moved quickly around the world. Australia remains the only continent free from this strain.

Wild, farmed and pet birds can catch H5 bird flu. Overseas other animals have become infected by this strain of H5 bird flu. These were mainly marine mammals and bird-eating scavengers noting cases were detected in other mammals including dairy cattle and cats.

A few human infections of the H5 bird flu strain of concern have been reported overseas. Most infected people had close contact with infected animals and contaminated environments. The likelihood of humans becoming infected is very low as current strains of H5 bird flu do not appear to transmit easily to or between humans.

What you can do to help

- ◆ Always wash your hands with soap before and after handling birds.
- ◆ **Commercial producers** and those **working with poultry** need to use effective on-farm biosecurity and hygiene measures to protect your birds from disease.
- ◆ **People with pet birds or backyard chickens** should take steps to protect their birds. Including:
 - not letting wild birds mingle with your birds or access feed and water containers
 - keeping aviaries and equipment clean.
- ◆ **Wildlife carers** should use hygiene measures and personal protection equipment when handling sick or injured birds or other animals.

H5 bird flu is a notifiable animal disease. If you think birds could be infected, you must report it to the **Emergency Animal Disease hotline on 1800 675 888**.



Be prepared
birdflu.gov.au

