

# Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) Information Sheet

Nebraska DHHS Phone Number: 402-471-2937

NEBRASKA

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## What to Know About Avian Influenza (Bird Flu)

### About bird flu:

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) also known as the bird flu, is caused by influenza type A strains. The current H5N1 subtype in North America has had a large impact on the poultry industry, led to significant mortality events in wild birds, and has crossed over into terrestrial and aquatic mammals. Waterfowl are currently the primary reservoirs for avian influenza viruses but have not yet been identified as the primary source of the viral transmission in domestic poultry. Major contributing factors of the spread of this virus include the movement of infected birds and contaminated equipment, which is why proactive measures to prevent the spread to unaffected areas are critical. HPAI is a zoonotic disease, however the risk to the general public remains low. However, individuals working in environments where they may be exposed to infected birds often face higher risk. Therefore, it is important to implement strong biosafety practices to minimize exposure.

### If you had close contact with sick or dying wild birds:

If you are aware of sick or dying birds in the area, you should avoid that area and avoid contact with them. However, if you do come into close contact with sick or dying wild birds you should take these precautions:

- Wear personal-protective equipment including disposable gloves, preferably double-gloved if handling carcasses, fitted protective face covering (e.g., N95 respirator), eye protection, and rubber/waterproof boots (disinfect after use) or boot covers.
- Clean and process birds outdoors. Do not harvest or handle birds that appear sick or are dead.
- Double bag dead carcass and properly dispose; do not leave carcass behind for animals to scavenge.
- Wash your hands immediately after cleaning or handling birds, and after visiting areas with wild birds.
- Disinfect all equipment, including hunting gear.
- Do not let pets, poultry, or other domestic animals near sick or dead birds. If such contact occurs, contact your veterinarian immediately and mention exposure to wild birds.

Your local health department may reach out for symptom monitoring if you were exposed to birds infected with avian influenza. Nebraska Game and Parks is asking for the public's help reporting sick, dead or abnormally behaving birds or a suspected mammal avian influenza event. Please report related events by filing a report through [the avian influenza page](#) (QR code to the right). Game and Parks staff will respond to reports for testing as warranted as they continue to monitor mortality events. If you have questions or concerns pertaining to Avian Influenza in wildlife, please contact the Wildlife Health Program at [NGPC.WildlifeHealth@nebraska.gov](mailto:NGPC.WildlifeHealth@nebraska.gov).



### If you become symptomatic after contact with sick or dying wild birds:

During the 10 days after your last exposure to sick or dying birds, you should watch for the symptoms listed below. Should you develop any of these symptoms, please notify your local health department (QR code bottom right) immediately so they may assist you in providing testing and treatment recommendations.

- Fever (Temperature of 100°F [37.8°C] or greater) or feeling feverish/chills
- Cough or sore throat
- Eye tearing, redness, or irritation
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Difficulty breathing/shortness of breath
- Headaches, muscle aches, or body aches
- Diarrhea

Find your local health department:

