

PUBLIC SERVICE ALERT NOTICE:

BIRD FLU (AVIAN INFLUENZA, H5N1)



As you may be aware, last week nearly 100 birds were euthanized at a popular Owen Sound sanctuary after they started exhibiting symptoms of Avian Influenza. Community members are urged to please be vigilant to watch for signs, symptoms, and to use prevention measures to stop the spread of the avian flu.

WHAT IS AVIAN INFLUENZA?

Avian Influenza is a type of influenza, a virus known as “bird flu”. Avian Influenza is found in wild birds, and can also infect domestic poultry, such as chickens and turkeys. It is rare for people to become infected with Avian Influenza. If people do become infected, it is usually because they have had close contact with infected poultry or their environment. Close contact could involve working with or having infected poultry in the backyard or house and touching infected poultry, their feces or bedding, or being in areas where infected poultry have recently been. Avian Influenza does not spread easily from person to person. In rare situations it has occurred with close contact, such as to a caregiver or a family member who is sick with Avian Influenza. This virus can be “low pathogenic”, meaning that they cause little to no illness in infected domestic birds, or “highly pathogenic”, meaning that they can cause severe illness or death in infected domestic birds. This terminology relates only to how the virus behaves in domestic birds and not to how it behaves in humans.

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF A WILD BIRD HAS BIRD FLU?

Typically, this form of the disease presents suddenly, often with very high mortality, with **affected birds developing swollen heads, a blue colouration of the comb and wattles, dullness, lack of appetite, respiratory distress, diarrhea and significant drop in egg production.**

CAN BIRDS RECOVER FROM AVIAN FLU?

Treatment and Control. **There is no readily available treatment for Avian Influenza** and most countries have a culling policy of affected birds. It is possible to produce a vaccine, but by the time this becomes commercially available the virus is likely to have mutated.

WHAT KILLS AVIAN FLU?

The proper handling and cooking of poultry and eggs to an internal temperature of 165°F kills bacteria and viruses, including H5N1 bird flu viruses.

Poultry Product	Minimum Internal Cooking Temperature
Whole poultry, drumsticks, thighs, and wings	82°C (180°F)
Poultry breasts	77°C (170°F)
Ground poultry	74°C (165°F)

- If a **wild bird(s) looks sick or is deceased**: call Canadian Wildlife Health – Cooperative: 1-866-673-4781.
- **For bird owners**, please call the CFIA Surveillance and Diagnostics: 226-217-8022.

For more information and resources please see the following:

- <https://www.nawash.ca/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Avian-Flu-May-27-2022.pdf>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/avian-flu-summary.htm>
- <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/Search#q=bird%20flu&sort=relevancy>
- https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/Documents/A/2015/avian-influenza-factsheet.pdf?sc_lang=en
- https://www.google.com/search?q=Bird+flu+in+owen+sound&rlz=1C5CHFA_enCA974CA974&oq=Bird+flu+in+owen+sound&aqs=chrome..69i57j33i160l4.80651j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8dc.gov/flu/avianflu/avian-flu-summary.htm