

Suspected Avian Influenza

Early identification of any individual with H5N1 avian influenza will be vital to preventing its spread.

When evaluating patients with fever and respiratory symptoms, it is essential to consider the possibility of avian flu. If they meet either of the criteria listed below, they should be placed in respiratory isolation and tested for H5N1 influenza.

1) An illness that requires hospitalization or is fatal and,

2) has a documented fever $>38^{\circ}\text{C}$ (100.4°F) and,

3) has radiographically- confirmed pneumonia, acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) or other respiratory illness with no alternate diagnosis established and,

4) has at least one of the following exposures within 10 days of symptom onset:

A. Travel to an area with documented avian (H5N1) influenza in poultry, wild birds and/or humans with at least one of the following: • Direct contact with (e.g. touching sick or dead domestic poultry); OR

- Direct contact with surfaces contaminated with poultry feces; OR
- Consumption of raw or incompletely cooked poultry or poultry products; OR
- Direct contact with sick or dead wild birds suspected or confirmed to have influenza H5N1; OR
- Close contact (within 1 meter or 3 feet) of a person who was hospitalized or died due to unexplained respiratory illness.
- List country(ies) and dates of travel
- List details of suspect H5N1 poultry, wild bird or human exposure history:

B. Close contact (within 1 meter) of an ill patient who was confirmed or suspected to have H5N1; OR

C. Worked with live influenza H5N1 virus in a laboratory.

Testing for H5N1 virus

If H5N1 influenza is suspected, specimens should be obtained and sent to the Public Health Laboratory for sub-typing.

This should be done regardless of rapid flu test results, because the sensitivity of the rapid flu test is not high enough to rule out influenza.

Collect a naso-pharyngeal swab and a throat swab and send them on viral transport medium to the Health Laboratory.

Mark all respiratory specimens “Suspect Avian Flu” so that cultures will not be done.

A surgical mask and tissues should be given to any patient in your waiting area with a cough to protect other patients and staff.



Report to Disease Control and Prevention immediately!

☎ (650) 573-2346 workdays, 8 am - 5 pm

☎☎ (650) 363-4981 for after hours emergencies ask for the on-call Health Officer.

See the Avian Influenza Algorithm and Specimen Submittal Form on the next two pages for more specific information.