

LIVINGSTON COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

2 Murray Hill Drive
Mt. Morris, New York 14510-1691

Jennifer Rodriguez, M.S., M.S.W.
Public Health Director

Phone (585) 243-7270
Fax (585) 243-7287
dept-of-health@co.livingston.ny.us
www.livingstoncounty.us/doh.htm



Administration & Fiscal: (585) 243-7270/(585) 335-1716 *Fax:* (585) 243-7287
Dog Control: (585) 243-6740/(585) 335-1720/ *Fax:* (585) 243-6751
Environmental Health: (585) 243-7280/(585) 335-1717 *Fax:* (585) 243-6793
Patient Services: (585) 243-7290/(585) 335-1719 *Fax:* (585) 243-6795
Preventive Services: (585) 243-7299/(585) 335-1718 *Fax:* (585) 243-6794
Mental Health: (585) 243-7250 *Fax:* (585) 243-7264

"Commitment to Leading The Community for a Healthier and Safer Tomorrow"

Frequently Asked Questions about Avian Flu

What is avian flu?

Avian flu, also known as the 'Bird Flu' or H5N1, is a strain of the influenza virus that primarily infects birds, but can also affect humans. Infected birds shed H5N1 viruses in their saliva, mucous and feces. Symptoms begin within two to eight days after exposure, and may seem like the common flu. Cough, fever, sore throat, muscle aches, headache, and shortness of breath may occur.

Why is avian flu important?

Human infections can have mild (e.g., eye infection, upper respiratory symptoms) to severe illness (e.g., pneumonia) that can result in death.

How is avian flu transmitted?

This type of flu is most often contracted by contact with sick birds, but can also be passed from person to person. Infections among people are rare; however, human infections can happen when enough virus gets into a person's eyes, nose, or mouth, or is inhaled.

Who is at risk?

People with close or lengthy unprotected contact (not wearing respiratory or eye protection) with infected birds or places that sick birds or their mucous, saliva, or feces have touched, may be at greater risk of H5N1 virus infection.

How do I protect myself?

Avoid touching your mouth, nose, or eyes after contact with birds or surfaces that may be contaminated with saliva, mucous, or feces from wild or domestic birds. Change your clothes before contact with healthy domestic poultry and handling wild birds, captive wild birds, farmed birds, and other pet birds.

What do I do if I get sick?

Contact your healthcare provider right away.