



What Hunters Should Know About Bird Flu (Avian Influenza)

Can people catch bird flu from wild birds?

At this time there are **no** known cases of people getting bird flu from wild birds, but it may be possible. Usually, bird flu viruses infect from bird to bird, with some types causing death in birds. Some of these viruses, however, can adapt and cause infection in people.

Is bird flu in North America?

The bird flu that has recently caused sickness and death in Asia and Europe is a type called H5N1. At this time, the type of H5N1 strain that has been causing sickness and death has not been found in North America.

How could bird flu enter North America?

H5N1 could enter North America several different ways:

- People moving infected birds from one place to another or illegally importing birds or bird products may bring H5N1 to North America.
- Wild birds that migrate and cross from Siberia into Alaska may catch H5N1 from infected birds in Asia, either on farms or in the wild, and bring it into North America.

Should hunters be concerned about H5N1?

At this time, hunters should not be overly concerned about bird flu, but they should remember the rules of hygiene while hunting. Good hygiene can keep hunters from catching H5N1 or the many other diseases wild birds may carry.

How can hunters protect themselves from bird diseases?

There are several ways hunters can protect themselves:

- Do not handle birds that are obviously sick or birds that are found dead.
- Keep your game birds cool, clean and dry.
- Do not eat, drink or smoke while cleaning your birds.
- Use rubber gloves when cleaning your birds.
- Wash your hands with soap and water or alcohol wipes after dressing birds.
- Clean all tools and surfaces immediately afterward; use hot, soapy water and then disinfect with a mixture of water and 10 percent chlorine bleach.
- Cook game meat thoroughly between 155-165 degrees Fahrenheit to kill disease-causing organisms.

Where can I find more information on bird flu?

See our online fact sheets at

<http://www.kcmo.org/health.nsf/web/flu?opendocument>

or visit the National Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Web site:

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/index.htm>

or the World Health Organization Web site:

http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en/index.html

or the Missouri Department of Conservation Web site:

<http://mdc.mo.gov/hunt/wtrfowl/birdflu.htm>