



Orange County

ATTENTION

STEVEN M. NEUHAUS
County Executive

PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT

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Commissioner of Health

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PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO AND POST CONSPICUOUSLY IN PEDIATRIC, FAMILY PRACTICE, PRIMARY CARE, EMERGENCY ROOM, INTERNAL MEDICINE, VETERINARY PRACTICES, URGENT CARE, INFECTIOUS DISEASE, LABORATORIES, HOSPITALS, CONGREGATE LIVING SETTINGS, MUNICIPALITIES, COUNTY STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS, BUSINESSES AND ALL SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES, FISH AND GAME CLUBS, FARMS, MIGRANT HOUSING, LIVE POULTRY MARKETS, FARMING SUPPLY STORES, PETTING ZOOS, 4H GROUPS, AND ORANGE COUNTY RESIDENTS WITH BACKYARD FLOCKS

PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT #3

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Virus Detected in New York State

According to the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), since January 2022, a highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) A (H5N1) virus has been detected in wild birds, commercial poultry, and backyard flocks in multiple states. On February 19, 2022, the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets (AGM) announced the first detection of this HPAI virus in a small, non-commercial backyard flock in Suffolk County. Subsequently, the virus has also been detected in birds from Dutchess and Ulster Counties.

Avian influenza (AI) is caused by an influenza type A virus that is carried by free flying waterfowl such as ducks, geese, and shorebirds, but can also infect domestic poultry (such as chickens, turkeys, pheasants, quail, domestic ducks, geese, and guinea fowl) and raptors. Infected wild birds can carry these viruses without getting sick, but domestic poultry get very sick and often die from these viruses.

The CDC believes that the current risk to the general public's health from the HPAI (H5N1) virus in the U.S. is low. Human infections with other HPAI viruses have occurred following close, prolonged, unprotected exposure to infected birds or an environment that has been contaminated by infected birds (e.g., feces, feathers). People who may be at a greater risk of infection include those who are more likely to have contact with infected birds, particularly poultry workers, people responding to an outbreak on a poultry farm, and waterfowl hunters. **There is likely no risk of infection for the general public.** People with close or prolonged unprotected contact with infected birds or virus-contaminated environments may be at greater risk of infection.

Because human infections with HPAI are possible, all people with exposure to birds suspected or confirmed to have HPAI H5N1 should self-monitor for any of the following signs and symptoms for 10 days after their last exposure:

- Fever (temperature of 100°F [37.8°C] or greater) or feeling feverish/chills
- Diarrhea
- Cough
- Nausea

- Sore throat
- Vomiting
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Fatigue
- Sneezing
- Seizures
- Muscle or body aches
- Rash
- Headaches
- Eye tearing, redness, irritation
- Difficulty breathing/Shortness of breath

Exposed individuals with signs or symptoms during the 10-day period should contact a healthcare provider to discuss possible testing. Medical and veterinary providers must report suspected and positive cases to the Orange County Department of Health at 845-291-2330.

If you receive calls from the public reporting sick or dead birds, they should be directed to contact the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, Division of Animal Industry OR the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation detailed below:

- DAI@agriculture.ny.gov
- (518)-457-3502
- www.agriculture.ny.gov/animals/poultry
- <https://www.dec.ny.gov/about/558.html#region3> for the DEC Office that covers Orange County

Additional information about Avian Influenza is available from:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/index.htm>
- United States Department of Agriculture
<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/animal-disease-information/avian/avian-influenza/ai>

If you have additional questions, please call the Orange County Department of Health at 845-291-2330