

A Public Health Perspective

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HPAI (H5N1): State Health Department Impact & Role







- When HPAI spreads to commercial poultry flocks from wild migratory birds, the primary impact is economic (depopulation).
- For Public Health, our concern “big picture” is that any animal flu virus that develops the ability to infect people can evolve, spread, and cause a pandemic.
- This translates practically to having the ability to detect possible HPAI infections in persons exposed to infected birds--either travelers, farm workers, or responders
 - Traveler surveillance (education, 1-866-PUB-HLTH, collaboration w/CDC)
 - State Public Health Laboratory infrastructure/capability to test for H5
 - Infrastructure to monitor workers/responders for ILI post-exposure, test, and mitigate

HPAI Response in Georgia: Multi-Agency

- Years of planning for HPAI with many partners
 - Georgia DPH
 - Georgia Poultry Laboratory Network
 - State and Federal Agriculture (GDA, DNR, USDA)
 - Industry, UGA
- Agriculture response includes biosecurity, surveillance and testing of flocks in the control zone
- DPH's primary role is to monitor persons exposed to affected birds (employees, responders) for ILI (modified electronic system) and provide testing for H5N1 infections


PREPARING FOR HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA (HPAI) IN GEORGIA

What should I do if I work with birds?

-  **Get your annual flu shot.**
The flu shot does not prevent avian influenza, but can protect you against seasonal flu.
-  **If you work with an infected flock,**
you should monitor your health for 10 days after the last day you came in contact with sick birds.
-  **Public Health will work with you or someone**
at your facility to provide instructions on how to monitor your health and how to get tested for influenza if you develop symptoms.
-  **If you have been around birds infected with HPAI**
and you experience any symptoms in the list to the right, you should call Public Health immediately so we can help get you tested. You can reach us 24 hours a day at **866-PUB-HLTH (782-4584)**.
-  **If you are sick and feel that you need to seek immediate medical treatment,** please let your doctor or healthcare provider know that you are experiencing illness after working with birds with avian influenza. Call Public Health or ask your doctor to call us.
-  **For more information on DPH's planning for avian influenza, please visit**
<https://dph.georgia.gov/avian-influenza>
or call **866-PUB-HLTH (866-782-4584)**.

Signs and Symptoms




- Fever (≥100°F[38°C])
- Chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Sneezing
- Shortness of breath
- Eye irritation
- Diarrhea
- Nausea or vomiting
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Rash
- Headaches



PREPARING FOR HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA (HPAI) IN GEORGIA

The risk to humans is low, however it can infect people.

HOW HPAI CAN SPREAD TO HUMANS

 **OR**  **OR** 

Direct contact with infected birds

Contact with birds that have died from avian influenza

Contact with bird droppings or litter from infected birds

HPAI in Birds in Georgia, 2022: Public Health Response

- In 2022, Georgia documented two HPAI outbreaks among backyard poultry flocks
- We monitored 117 persons post-exposure
 - For 10 days after last exposure
 - Enrolled in electronic system in SendSS
 - Daily reports/contact
 - 44 State Agriculture Responders
 - 37 farm workers
 - 32 USDA/Contract Responders to other states (GA residents)
- We arranged telemedicine consults and GPHL tested 2 people who developed ILI symptoms during their monitoring period (both negative for flu and positive for rhinovirus)

