

AVIAN FLU “BIRD FLU” FACT SHEET

This Fact Sheet alerts Americans to the most recent occurrences of Influenza A H5N1 (avian influenza strain). A number of countries are reporting cases of avian influenza, commonly referred to as “bird flu” in their domestic and wild bird populations. The H5N1 strain of influenza causes severe disease in domesticated fowl. In addition, there are confirmed cases of bird-to-human transmissions of avian influenza in the South East Asia region, many of which have resulted in death. Please visit the World Health Organization-WHO website, http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/country/en/ for the most up to date information on the countries affected.

The Department of State, the Center of Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization have not issued any travel alerts or warnings for avian flu-infected areas. However, the CDC advises travelers to countries with documented H5N1 outbreaks to avoid poultry farms, contact with animals in live food markets and any surfaces that appear to be contaminated with feces or fluids from poultry or other animals. Specific CDC travel information relating to avian influenza, including preventive measures is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/index.htm> WHO guidance related to avian influenza is available at http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en

Americans who are planning travel to a country that has reported the virus or who are concerned about the Avian flu are advised to monitor the CDC and the WHO web sites for the latest information.

Additional country information can be obtained from the Department of State's Consular Information Sheets at <http://travel.state.gov> and from the Department of State's toll-free number, 1-888-407-4747, or if calling from overseas, 202-501-4444.

CDC Contact Information:

Public Inquiries:

English (888) 246-2675

Spanish (888) 246-2857

TTY (866) 874-2646

Mon-Fri 8am-11pm EST

Sat-Sun 10am-8pm EST Address:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

1600 Clifton Rd.

Atlanta, GA 30333

USA (404) 639-3311

WHO Liaison Office in Washington, DC

Contact Information:

Telephone: (202) 331-9081

Facsimile: (202) 331-9097

Address:

WHO Liaison Office

1775 K Street, N.W., Suite 430

Washington, D.C. 20006 USA

Source: US Department of State, Center of Disease Control and Prevention, World Health Organization----Dated: November 9, 2005

GUIDANCE FOR TRAVELERS

The CDC has issued precautions for travel to countries that are reporting outbreaks of avian influenza A (H5N1) in humans and animals. **Currently, CDC does not recommend that the general public avoid travel to any of the countries affected by avian influenza A (H5N1).** CDC has issued the following recommendations for travel to countries reporting human or animal cases of avian influenza A (H5N1):

Before you leave:

- Assemble a travel health kit containing basic first aid and medical supplies. Be sure to include a thermometer and alcohol-based hand rub for hand hygiene.
- Educate yourself and others who may be traveling with you about influenza. Information about influenza is provided on CDC's influenza website: (<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/>).
- Be sure you are up to date with all your shots, and see your health-care provider at least 4–6 weeks before travel to get any additional shots or information you may need. CDC's health recommendations for international travel are provided on CDC's Travelers' Health website: <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/>.
- You may wish to check your health insurance plan or get additional insurance that covers medical evacuation in the event of illness. Information about medical evacuation services is provided on the U.S. Department of State website: <http://www.travel.state.gov/medical.html>.
- Identify in-country health-care resources in advance of your trip.

While you are in an area where avian influenza cases have been reported:

- **At this time, CDC recommends that travelers to countries experiencing outbreaks of this disease in poultry should avoid areas with live poultry, such as live animal markets and poultry farms. Large amounts of the virus are known to be excreted in the droppings from infected birds.**
- As with other infectious illnesses, one of the most important and appropriate preventive practices is careful and frequent hand hygiene. Cleaning your hands often using either soap and water or waterless alcohol-based hand sanitizers removes potentially infectious materials from your skin and helps prevent disease transmission.
- Influenza viruses are destroyed by heat; therefore, as a precaution, all foods from poultry, including eggs, should be thoroughly cooked.
- If you develop respiratory symptoms or any illness that requires prompt medical attention, a U.S. consular officer can assist in locating appropriate medical services and informing family or friends. See this website for more information about what to do if you become ill while abroad <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/other/illness-abroad.htm>. It is advisable that you defer further travel until you are free of symptoms.

After your return:

- Monitor your health for 10 days.
- If you become ill with fever or respiratory symptoms during this 10-day period, consult a health-care provider. *Before your visit to a health-care setting, tell the provider about your symptoms and recent travel so that he or she can be aware you have traveled to an area reporting avian influenza.*

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