Advice on Prevention of Avian Influenza for the General Public

Advice from Department of Health

The Department of Health advises the general public to take the following precautionary measures to minimize the risk of Avian Influenza:

Health Advice for the General Public

- Avoid contact with birds, poultry or their droppings
  - Wash hands thoroughly with liquid soap and water immediately if you have been in contact with birds, poultry or their droppings.
  - When buying and handling live chickens, do not blow at their bottoms.
- Maintain good personal hygiene
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
  - Keep hands clean at all time. Wash hands frequently, especially before touching your mouth, nose, or eyes, before handling food and eating, after going to toilet, touching public installations or equipment such as escalator handrails, elevator control panels or door knobs, or when hands are dirtied by respiratory secretion after coughing or sneezing.
  - Wash hands with liquid soap for at least 20 seconds, and then dry with a disposable towel or a hand dryer.
  - If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, clean them with 70 - 80% alcohol-based handrub as an effective alternative.
  - Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of the soiled tissues properly into a lidded rubbish bin, and then wash hands thoroughly.
  - If you have respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask and consult a doctor promptly.
- Maintain good environmental hygiene
  - Maintain good indoor ventilation.
  - Home should be cleaned thoroughly at least once per week with 1 in 99 diluted household bleach (mixing 10 ml of bleach containing 5.25% sodium hypochlorite with 990 ml of water) for non-metallic surfaces, wait until dry and then rinse with water. For metallic surfaces, disinfect with 70% alcohol.
  - Avoid going to crowded places with poor ventilation if you are feeling unwell.
➢ U-trap should be prevented from drying up and drain outlets should be disinfected regularly about once a week.

➢ Repair immediately if there is defect in the U-trap or foul odour coming out from drain outlets. Qualified technicians can be hired for inspection and repair.

➢ For details, please refer to the HKU Infection Control and Preparedness Plan for Influenza Pandemic.

• Observe food hygiene

➢ Five keys to food safety:
  ❖ Choose safe raw materials.
  ❖ Keep hands and utensils clean.
  ❖ Separate raw and cooked food.
  ❖ Cook thoroughly.
  ❖ Keep food at safe temperature.

➢ Wash eggs with detergent if soiled with faecal matter and cook and consume them immediately. Eggs should be cooked well until the white and yolk become firm. Do not eat raw eggs or dip cooked food into any sauce with raw eggs.

➢ Poultry should be cooked thoroughly. If there is pinkish juice running from the cooked poultry, or the middle part of its bone is still red, the poultry should be cooked again until fully done.

• Maintain healthy lifestyle

➢ Build up good body resistance and have a healthy lifestyle. This can be achieved through balanced diet, regular exercise and adequate rest.

➢ Do not smoke.

➢ Avoid alcohol consumption.

Travel Advice

➢ Avoid touching birds, poultry or their droppings and visiting wet markets, live poultry markets or farms when travelling to affected areas.

➢ Travellers if feeling unwell when outside Hong Kong, especially if having a fever or cough, should wear a surgical mask and inform the hotel staff or tour leader and seek medical advice at once.

➢ Travellers returning from affected areas with Avian Influenza outbreaks should consult doctors promptly if they have respiratory symptoms, and inform the doctor of the travel history and wear a surgical mask to help prevent spread of the disease.
• For detailed travel health advice on Avian Influenza, please refer to [Advice on Prevention of Avian Influenza for Travellers](#).

**Specific Advice to HKU Members**

HKU Task Force advises the HKU members to follow the above guidelines and observe the following measures to minimize the risk of Avian Influenza:

• Wear a surgical mask if having respiratory symptoms or fever, or caring for patient with fever or respiratory symptoms, or going to hospital or clinic.

• **DO NOT** come to work or attend lectures/classes/meetings if the HKU member concerned is having fever of 38℃ or above, put on a surgical mask and seek medical advice promptly.

• If the HKU member concerned has history of close contact with a suspected or confirmed Avian Influenza patient within the past 10 days:
  - **DO NOT** come to work or attend lectures/classes/meetings.
  - Put on a surgical mask.
  - Inform University Health Service at 39172514 or email to [uhshe@hku.hk](mailto:uhshe@hku.hk).
  - Inform Department Head, Warden or Master, if applicable.
  - Seek medical advice promptly.

HKU Task Force on Infectious Diseases

Created 30 December, 2014

Updated 15 October, 2018
References


2. Centre for Health Protection. Avian Influenza [Internet]. Hong Kong HKSAR; 2018 [updated 2018 April 3; cited 2018 June 1]. Available from https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/healthtopics/content/24/13.html