



Dairy Workers Are at Risk for H5N1 Bird Flu



How to Protect Yourself from the Virus at Work

Avian influenza H5N1, also known as bird flu, is a very contagious virus that normally makes birds sick. Recently, the virus has changed and now it is making cows and people sick. People who work with cows are at higher risk of getting sick from bird flu.

Learn how to protect yourself from this virus!

How do people get sick?

We do not know how the bird flu is spreading from cows to humans, but we do know that sick cows have a lot of the virus in their milk. Cows can also spread the virus through their spit, feces, and other body fluids. It's important to be very careful around cows and milk that has not been pasteurized (heated up enough to kill any viruses or germs).

What can you do to protect yourself from bird flu?

Take these steps to protect yourself from getting sick with bird flu if you work with cows:

1. **Wash your hands right away after working with cows, handling sick or dead animals**, and before you take any breaks. Wash for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, then rinse and dry.
2. **DO NOT** touch your face, nose, mouth, or eyes while working with cows or touching anything that cows or their milk have touched.
3. **DO NOT** eat food with dirty hands or gloves without washing your hands first or using hand sanitizer.
4. **DO NOT** drink raw milk or eat products made with raw milk (like some types of queso fresco) that have not been pasteurized.
5. **Use Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)**. Your employer should give you:



Aprons or coveralls that will keep you dry.



N-95 face mask or a respirator that covers your nose and mouth completely to stop you from breathing in droplets that may have the virus.



Safety goggles or face shields to stop milk from splashing in your face.



Single-use head or hair cover to protect your ears.



Rubber boots and waterproof gloves to keep your hands and feet dry.

What symptoms should you look for?

It's important to seek medical care if you start feeling sick with these symptoms:



- Fever (temperature of 100° F or 37.8° C or more)
- Chills
- Stomach and body pain
- Cough
- Red or swollen eyes
- Difficulty breathing

How can you find out if you have bird flu?

If you have any of these symptoms, it's important to go to a health center or hospital to be tested for bird flu.

When you go to get tested:

- Your doctor or nurse can check to see if you have the flu by using a cotton swab in your throat, nose, or eyes.
- If you have flu, they will do another test with the cotton swab to see if you have bird flu or a human flu. Your doctor can give you medicine to help with your symptoms if you have any type of flu.
- If your test results come back showing that you have bird flu, your doctor or nurse will give you more information about next steps, which may include staying home from work and gatherings until your symptoms are gone.

If you do not have health insurance, you can ask your health center or local pharmacy for any discounts to help you cover the cost.

***Please remember to tell the doctor or nurse that you work with animals like cows or poultry!**

Stay healthy!
Protect yourself, watch for symptoms,
and remember you have the right to get tested for bird flu.

To get connected to a health center near you where you can get tested, contact [Call for Health](tel:+18003779968) helpline at +1 (800) 377-9968 or through WhatsApp at +1 (737) 414-5121. Open your phone camera over the squared QR code and scan!

