

Advice from an Expert

“American consumers don’t have to worry about getting avian flu virus from eating poultry,” says Dr. Michael Doyle, director of the Center for Food Safety at the University of Georgia. “We know that if you properly cook poultry, it’s safe.”

For more information:

www.cdc.gov/flu/avian

www.AvianInfluenzaInfo.com



“Bird Flu”

What You Need To Know

You’ve probably heard about “bird flu” – the disease that has killed poultry overseas and more than 100 people, too. Could it cause problems in the United States? Here are some important facts you need to know.



Bird Flu Facts

“Bird flu” is NOT the same thing as human pandemic flu.

“Bird flu” is the Asian strain of H5N1 highly pathogenic avian influenza that is devastating to flocks of poultry. Humans who have gotten it have had close contact with infected birds, mostly in rural villages in Asia. Where there is no such contact, there’s no human disease.

Some fear that Asian avian influenza could be the basis for a *human* disease if the virus changes to the point where it can spread easily from human to human. But that hasn’t happened, and some scientists doubt that it ever will.



Your food supply is protected.

The poultry industry and the U.S. government take Asian avian influenza very seriously. Security on poultry farms is very tight. Birds are kept indoors so they will not mix with wild birds, which can carry AI.

Testing programs are in place.

The industry and state governments sponsor extensive testing programs to watch for any signs of Asian avian influenza.

Any flock found to be infected with highly pathogenic H5N1 would be destroyed on the farm and would not enter the food supply.

Birds are inspected by USDA.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) inspects every chicken and turkey heading into the food supply in this country. In the unlikely event that birds with Asian avian influenza would leave the farm, USDA inspection would keep them from entering the food supply.

You can't get it from properly handled and cooked food.

What if an infected bird did somehow get into the food supply? According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), you can't get avian influenza from properly handled and cooked food. The USDA recommends cooking poultry to a minimum internal temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit. When preparing eggs, the yolk and white should both be firm, and any dishes containing egg should be cooked to 160 degrees Fahrenheit. That will ensure that any influenza viruses that may be present would be destroyed.