

Avian Flu

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What is Avian influenza?

- Avian influenza or bird flu is a highly contagious viral disease caused by Influenza Type A viruses which generally affects poultry birds such as chickens and turkeys.
- There are many strains of the virus – some of them are mild and may merely cause a low egg production or other mild symptoms among chickens, while others are severe and lethal.
- Wild aquatic birds such as ducks and geese are the natural reservoir of Influenza A viruses and the central players in the ecology of these viruses.

History of bird flu among humans:

- It was in 1997 when humans are first known to have contracted bird flu following an outbreak in a live bird market of Hong Kong. It was the H5N1 strain of the virus.
- Subsequently, several other strains of the virus such as H5N2 and H9N2 spread from animals to humans, thus becoming a global public health concern.

Does it spread easily to humans?

- No, it does not. Generally, people coming in close contact with infected alive or dead birds have contracted the H5N1 bird flu, and it does not usually spread from person to person.
- There is also no evidence, that the disease can be spread to people through properly prepared and cooked poultry food.
- The virus is sensitive to heat, and dies in cooking temperatures.

Q1)What is the full form of H5N1?

The name H5N1 refers to the subtypes of surface antigens present on the virus: hemagglutinin type 5 and neuraminidase type 1. There are 18 different hemagglutinin subtypes and 11 different neuraminidase subtypes.

Source: [The Hindu](#)

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/avian-flu/>

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