



Common Questions & How to Answer Them

Q: What happens if a bird gets sick?

A: "When a bird gets sick with avian influenza, veterinarians help take care of them. Sometimes, birds rest and get better. If a bird is very sick, they are taken care of in a special way so other birds don't get sick. There is also a shot (avian influenza vaccine) but it is currently only authorized to be used in California Condors since their population is extremely vulnerable. In wild birds, scientists focus more on monitoring for sickness and preventing spread to other birds since vaccinating wild birds is more difficult."

Q: Can our pet birds get HPAI?

A: "It is possible for pet birds to get HPAI, but we keep them safe by cleaning their cages and making sure they stay away from wild birds."

Q: Can people get HPAI?

A: "It's very rare for people to get it, but doctors and scientists are always watching to make sure we're safe."

A Bird Flu Timeline

1900s: Scientists first identified bird flu.

1997: Birds in Asia got sick; a few people were infected.

2003: H5N1 spread globally; scientists worked to contain it.

2014-2015: Bird flu reached North America.

2021-Present: A new wave is spreading worldwide; scientists are monitoring it.

One Health & Bird Flu: Why It Matters

- **One Health** connects human, animal, and environmental health. Keeping nature healthy helps protect both animals and people.
- **Bird Flu Connection:** Though bird flu mainly affects birds, it can spread to people and other animals.
- **Prevention:** Caring for birds and monitoring their environment helps stop the spread of disease, protecting everyone.



A PARENT'S GUIDE

How to Talk to Your Kids About Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)

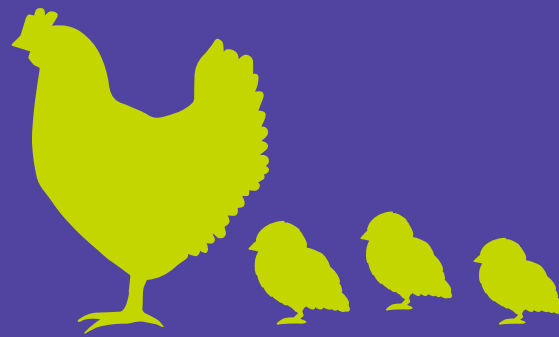
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What Is Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)?

HPAI is a type of flu that mostly affects birds, but can also affect other animals and sometimes even people. It's important for kids to understand what it is without feeling scared, so they can stay safe and informed.

How to Explain HPAI Safely

- Use gentle language. Avoid scary words like “deadly” or “dangerous.” Instead, say “sick” or “not feeling well.”
- Focus on helpers. Remind kids that veterinarians, farmers, and scientists are all working hard to help birds and other animals, while making sure people stay healthy too.



Talking Tips for Ages 5–10

1. Start Simple

- For younger kids: “Avian influenza or bird flu is a kind of sickness that makes birds feel very bad. Some birds get a cold, and others get very sick.”
- For older kids: “Avian influenza (bird flu) is a type of flu that mostly affects birds like chickens, ducks, and wild birds. Some bird species get very sick and even die. Other animals can get it too. Even people can get it, although it's very rare.”

2. Reassure Them

- Key message: “You are safe. Animal and human doctors along with scientists who study disease patterns (epidemiologists) are working together to help keep birds, other animals, and people healthy.”

3. Answer Their Questions Honestly

- If they ask “Can I get HPAI?” say: “It's very rare for people to get it, and there's a lot we can do to keep ourselves safe.”
- If they ask “What happens to sick birds?” say: “Veterinarians take care of sick birds just as doctors help people when they're sick.”

4. Empower Them to Help

- Teach kids how to help prevent the spread of germs:
 - Washing hands: “Washing your hands after playing outside or near animals is one way to stay healthy.”
 - Don't touch wild birds: “It's best not to get too close to birds you see outside. If you find a sick bird, let an adult know.”



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