

Pandemic Influenza Summary Sheet



What do I need to know?

** N.B. This information is accurate as of July 2007. Please visit the SC Pandemic Flu Website for updated information, or contact Eric Starbuck at estarbuck@savechildren.org or Kathryn Bolles at kbolles@savechildren.org*

- H5N1, an avian influenza, is severe and lethal for birds.
- H5N1 has infected humans who have extensive contact with infected birds.
- H5N1 crossed the species barrier infecting over 300 people, killing 60% in isolated settings with high levels of contact with infected birds.
- On only three documented occasions, has H5N1 gone from one person to another.
- H5N1 has not met the prerequisite of a pandemic: no ability to spread efficiently and sustainably among humans.
- Most common source is direct contact with diseased poultry or wild migratory birds.
- Risky behaviors include slaughtering, defeathering, butchering, preparing, or eating partially cooked infected birds for consumption.
- All cases occur in rural or peri-urban households where small flocks of poultry are kept.
- Cases are concentrated in previously healthy children and young adults because of their exposure to infected birds.

What is the case definition?

- Influenza-like illness, which means fever and cough or fever and sore throat.
- Fever above 38°C.
- Lower respiratory symptoms.
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing.
- History of close contact with birds or known infected bird or person.

When do I need to worry?

- When there is evidence of sustained human-to-human transmission, and when WHO announces a phase shift of the global pandemic alert from phase 3 (current threat) to 4, 5 or 6.

Surveillance

- Ensure proper laboratory facilities and equipment.
- Monitor circulating influenza strains in the country.
- Identify new subtypes of influenza infection as early as possible.
- Monitor the health of poultry in the country.
- *N.B. SC is not currently engaging in these activities.*

How do I work with the community?

- Guidelines for community- and household-level interventions are currently in development. The latest resources and tools can be found at: www.savethechildren.org/publications/technical-resources/avian-flu/