

Influenza Viruses Information Sheet

What are they? How are they spread?

With the onset of the flu season, and with the heightened awareness of Avian Influenza, the following important facts and frequently asked questions on influenza have been compiled based on information provided by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and World Health Organization (WHO). For additional information refer to the following websites:

CDC <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/gen-info/>

WHO http://www.who.int/topics/avian_influenza/en/

EPA http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/factsheets/avian_flu_products.htm

FAQ's: Types of Influenza Viruses and how they are spread?

There are three types of influenza viruses – A, B and C. Humans can be infected by all three types of influenza. Only influenza A viruses infect birds. In fact, wild birds are the natural host for all subtypes of influenza A virus.¹

Human influenza is transmitted from person-to-person primarily via virus-laden large droplets that are generated when infected persons cough or sneeze; these large droplets can then be directly deposited onto the mucosal surfaces of the upper respiratory tracts of susceptible persons who are near (e.g. within 3 feet) the droplet source. Transmission may also occur through direct and indirect contact with respiratory secretions.²

Avian influenza (bird flu) occurs naturally among birds. Bird flu is very contagious among birds. Infected birds shed flu virus in their saliva, nasal secretions and feces. Susceptible birds become infected when they have contact with contaminated excretions or surfaces that are contaminated with excretions.³

Avian influenza viruses do not normally infect species other than birds and pigs. Extensive investigation of infections in humans determined that close contact with infected poultry was the source of human infection.⁴ Direct contact with infected poultry and surfaces or objects contaminated with their feces, is presently considered the main route of human infection. It is often impossible to determine if human-to-human transmission has occurred since the family members are exposed to the same animal and environmental sources as well as to one another. (WHO fact sheet)

Avian influenza refers to a large group of different influenza viruses that primarily affect birds. Avian H5N1 is a strain of Type A Influenza with pandemic potential, since it might ultimately adapt into a strain that is contagious among humans.⁵ Of the few avian influenza that have crossed the species barrier to infect humans, H5N1 has caused the largest number of cases of severe disease and death in humans. (WHO fact sheet)

Disinfectants and Avian Influenza Claims

According to the EPA web site: “Although there are no antimicrobial products registered specifically against the H5N1 subtype of avian influenza A viruses, EPA believes that the currently registered avian influenza A products, when applied in strict accordance with the label directions, will be effective against the H5N1 strain.”⁶

Efficacy of disinfectants against influenza viruses

The following 3M disinfectants are EPA approved against avian influenza A.

- . 3M™ Quat Disinfectant Cleaner Product No. 5
- . 3M™ CompuBlendII Base V with Fragrance
- . 3M™ Phenolic Disinfectant Cleaner Product No. 18
- . 3M™ HB Quat Disinfectant Cleaner Product No. 25
- . 3M™ HB Quat Disinfectant Cleaner - Gallon

According to the CDC Guidelines for Infection Control high-touch surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected more frequently than minimal-touch surfaces. Workers contaminate their hands by touching surfaces; therefore good hand hygiene is critical.

References:

1. Influenza Viruses – CDC – www.cdc.gov/flu/avian/gen-info/flu-viruses.htm
2. Updated Infection Control Measure for the Prevention and Control of Influenza in Health-Care Facilities – CDC
3. Information about Avian Influenza (Bird Flu) and Avian Influenza A (H5N1) Virus – CDC
4. Avian Influenza – WHO – www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/avian_influenza
5. Ten Things you Need to Know about Pandemic Influenza - WHO
6. EPA http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/factsheets/avian_flu_products.htm

Additional Information:

U.S. Dept of Health & Human Services <http://pandemicflu.gov/general/>

3M Occupational Health & Environmental Safety www.3M.com/OccSafety

Environmental Protection Agency <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/factsheets/avian.htm>

Important:

The information provided in this report is believed to be reliable; however, due to the wide variety of intervening factors, 3M does not warrant that the results will necessarily be obtained. All details concerning product specifications and terms of sale are available from 3M.



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