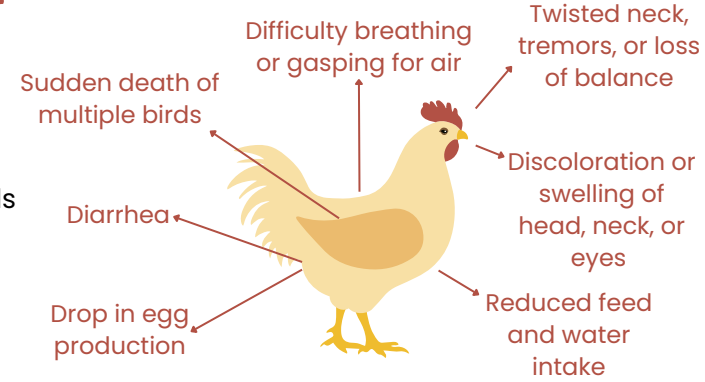
Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)

SMALL FLOCKS COLLABORATIVE

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) is a serious, highly contagious virus that **causes sudden death in birds**. HPAI is often fatal in chickens, turkeys, and gamebirds. Ducks and geese can carry the virus without looking sick or succumb to the disease. Wild waterfowl and other birds spread the virus to flocks through droppings or direct contact. Some forms of HPAI virus can infect people and other mammals. HPAI is a reportable disease—if your flock shows signs, contact your veterinarian or state animal health official immediately.

Signs to Look For

The **most common sign is sudden death**. Several birds may die without warning over just a few days. If multiple birds die suddenly, call your veterinarian or state animal health official right away.

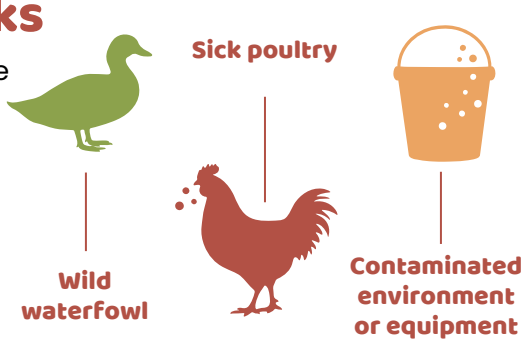


Quick Facts

- Caused by influenza virus
- **Spreads quickly** and is **highly contagious**
- Often causes sudden death in poultry
- Certain strains of HPAI can infect humans, cats, and wild and domestic mammals
- Infections **must be reported** to state animal health officials

How HPAI Gets into Flocks

- Wild waterfowl (i.e. ducks and geese) are the main source of the virus; they can shed the virus without showing signs.
- The virus spreads flock-to-flock through droppings, feathers, saliva, and respiratory secretions.
- People, pets, wildlife, vehicles, and equipment can carry it into your flock.



Prevention

1. Practice Biosecurity

- Limit contact with birds from other flocks.
- Wear coop-dedicated shoes to keep out germs.
- Keep the coop, equipment, and your hands clean.

2. Keep Wild Birds Out

- Don't let your birds commingle with wild birds.
- Use netting to keep wild birds out and your birds in.
- Cover feed and water.

3. Limit Visitors and Shared Tools

- Limit visitors and require boot covers.
- Don't share or borrow tools or equipment.

4. Avoid Mixing Animal Types

- Waterfowl can spread HPAI without symptoms.
- Chickens, turkeys, gamebirds, cats, and other mammals can get sick.

5. Separate New or Returning Birds

- Keep new or returning birds away from your flock for at least 3 weeks and monitor for signs of illness.
- Germs can spread before birds show signs.

When Birds Get Sick

1. Report Immediately

- HPAI is reportable in all states.
- If you suspect HPAI, call your vet or state animal health official immediately.

2. Wear Protective Gear

- Wear gloves, a mask, and clean clothes when handling birds.
- Do not handle sick or dead birds if you are immunocompromised.

3. Monitor All Animals

- Watch for signs in your flock, pets, wildlife, and people.

4. Stop Movement

- Don't move birds, eggs, or equipment on or off your property, and avoid visiting other farms to prevent spreading disease.

5. Disease Control Steps

- Controlling the virus may require depopulation.
- Work with state animal health officials to clean, review biosecurity, and prevent future outbreaks.

Find out more at
www.healthybirds.info