

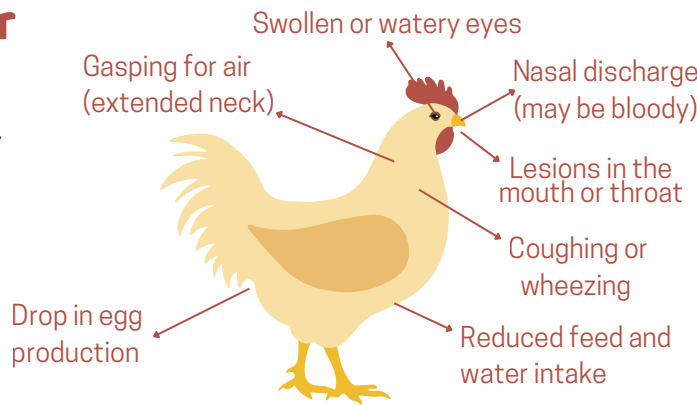
# Infectious Laryngotracheitis (ILT)

**Infectious Laryngotracheitis (ILT)** is a serious, **contagious respiratory disease** caused by a virus. It mainly affects chickens but can also infect pheasants and peafowl. It spreads through respiratory droplets, direct bird-to-bird contact, and contaminated equipment. Signs include watery eyes, coughing, gasping for air, or sudden death. **Infected, recovered, or vaccinated birds can carry and spread the virus** without signs. **There is no cure** for ILT, prevention through good biosecurity is key.

## Signs to Look For

ILT looks like other respiratory diseases. Watch for coughing, gasping, neck stretching, or sudden death.

**Testing is the only way to confirm disease.**



## Quick Facts



ILT is caused by a herpesvirus



Spreads quickly, and can cause high mortality in chicken flocks



Gamebirds and peafowl can be infected, but ILT is rare in turkeys



Does **not** spread to or infect humans



Spreads through infected birds, contaminated surfaces, and coughing or nasal discharge

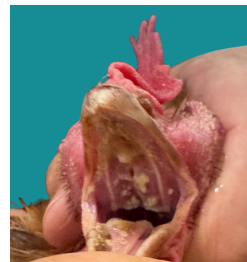
## How ILT Spreads

### Contact with infected birds:

- Infect birds and shed virus in saliva, nasal discharge, eye secretions, and respiratory droplets
- Carrier birds can appear healthy but still shed the virus

### Contact with contaminated surfaces:

- Sharing tools, waterers, or bedding from infected flocks
- Inhaling virus in dust or dander



Note mouth lesions and swollen eyes

## Prevention

### 1. Practice Biosecurity

- Always limit contact with birds from other flocks to prevent disease spread.
- Wear coop-dedicated shoes to keep out germs.
- Wash hands and keep coop/equipment clean.

### 2. Separate New or Returning Birds

- Isolate new or returning birds for at least 3 weeks and monitor for signs of illness.
- Germs can spread before birds show signs.
- Birds that have recovered from or were vaccinated for ILT may carry and spread the virus.

### 3. Limit Visitors and Shared Tools

- Limit visitors and require boot covers.
- Avoid sharing or borrowing tools or equipment.

### 4. Handle Healthy Birds First

- Care for birds in this order: young → adults → sick, to avoid spreading germs.
- Wash or sanitize hands and equipment between different bird groups.

## When Birds Get Sick

### 1. Work with a Veterinarian

- ILT is reportable in some states.
- Your veterinarian can help confirm the disease and guide next steps.

### 2. Isolate Sick Birds

- Separate sick birds from the flock to limit spread of the virus.

### 3. Don't Spread Disease

- Do not buy or sell birds during or after an outbreak.
- Even healthy-looking birds can shed this virus.

### 4. Confirm with Testing

- Testing can identify the cause of illness and help guide your next steps.
- Work with your veterinarian to coordinate testing.

### 5. Plan Long-Term Management

- Infected birds remain carriers, so some flocks may choose to depopulate their flock.
- If ILT is reportable in your state, there may be additional management requirements.