



*(Translation)*

## **Prevent Human Infection with H7N9 Avian Influenza — Guideline for Crèches, Schools and Similar Establishments**

Updated on 2013.12.3

H7N9 avian influenza is caused by influenza H7N9 virus. In the past, H7N9 avian flu infection is mainly found in poultry and birds, with low pathogenicity. To date, confirmed human infection cases of H7N9 avian influenza have been reported in various regions of China, the conditions of the infected cases are serious, with a high fatality rate, of which certain cases have a history of occupational or contact exposure to poultry, birds or other animals; therefore, crèches, schools and similar establishments are urged to stay vigilant and take precautionary measures against the disease.

### **Clinical features**

Early symptoms of the disease are similar to those of other respiratory infections, including fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties. Severe infection can result in respiratory failure, multi-organ failure and even death.

### **Mode of transmission**

There is still uncertainty at the moment. Based on the information on other subtypes of avian flu viruses (e.g. H5N1), people mainly become infected with H7N9 virus through close contact with infected birds and poultry (live or dead) or other animals or their droppings. There is so far no evidence of continuous human-to-human infection. Incubation period can be as long as 10 days.

### **High risk groups**

People in close contact with poultry or other animals are more susceptible to contracting H7N9 avian influenza virus. The elderly, children and people with chronic illness have a higher risk of developing complications such as pneumonia.

### **Management**



Based on the current information, H7N9 avian influenza is generally more severe than common flu, and most patients require hospital care. Some anti-viral drugs may be effective in treating the condition. Treatments are mainly supportive. Patients should get adequate rest and drink plenty of water. In severe cases, hospital care may be required. Unless there is bacterial infections, antibiotics should not be used.

## Prevention

In order to prevent infection of H7N9 avian flu, crèches, schools and similar establishments are reminded to be vigilant against the disease and adopt the following measures:

### 1. Coordination and management

- Pay attention to the epidemic information promulgated by the MSAR Government and coordinate with the preventive measures recommended;
- Timely promulgate and update information related to disease prevention to staff, students as well as their parents;
- Pay attention to the health status of students; students who have fever or feeling unwell should be advised to consult doctor and take rest at home;

### 2. Avoid contact with poultry and birds

- Children, particularly, should avoid direct contact with poultry or wild birds whenever possible;
- While overseas, do not visit farms or zoos with poultry and wild birds;
- If birds are kept in schools or crèches, do not release them; the birds should be kept in places where they have no contact with wild birds;
- Avoid close contact with birds, wash hands as soon as possible with water and liquid soap after touching or handling their droppings;
- If hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions or excretions of birds, wash hands immediately with water and liquid soap.

### 3. Food hygiene

- Do not consume undercooked poultry meat, internal organs and blood products; food should be heated to a core temperature of at least 70 °C to kill any germs that may be present in the food;
- Do not consume eggs that have not been thoroughly cooked, or add raw or undercooked egg into the cooked food;
- Avoid putting the raw and cooked food together;



- The utensils (including table, chopping board, knife and cooking utensils) used for food preparation should be cleansed properly before used for another kind of food preparation;

#### 4. Personal hygiene

- Observe good personal hygiene, wash hands frequently, especially after going to toilet, before cooking or preparing any kind of food;
- Cover the mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing. Dispose of nasal and mouth discharge properly, and then wash hands thoroughly;
- Wear a mask and seek medical advice promptly if developing fever or respiratory symptoms, and inform the doctor of your travel history or contact history of live birds or poultry. Stay at home and do not go to work or school if advised by doctor.

#### 5. Environmental hygiene

- Keep indoor area tidy, clean and ventilated;
- Clean and disinfect toys, furniture, floor and frequently touched surfaces at least once daily;
- Wipe and disinfect objects or areas contaminated by secretions or excretions properly and immediately;
- Provide toilets with liquid soap and disposable tissues or hand dryer.
- Ensure disposable paper towel and alcohol-based hand sanitizer are provided in public reception areas.

#### 6. Management of sick children/staff

- Pay attention to the health status of children/staff; if they have fever or other symptoms of illness, advise the sick child/staff to consult doctor promptly, and let them stay home for adequate rest;
- Inform the Education and Youth Affairs Bureau / Social Welfare Institute, and the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention of the Health Bureau (Tel: 28533525; fax: 25533524) if you notice a large number of children/staff become sick or when there is a sudden increase of absentees.

Centre for Disease Control and Prevention  
Health Bureau