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**What To Do If Someone You Know Is Diagnosed With Bird Flu**

**By "Sarah K. Jenkins"**

Bird flu is a scary and devastating disease. It has been decades since an influenza virus has had such misfortunate potential. With the virus sweeping through most of Asia, Europe, and the Middle East, it is just a matter of time before it reaches every corner of the world. If the virus mutates, an even more deadly issue will be at hand. With such negative predictions, it is almost impossible not to imagine yourself or a love one at the hands of the disease. What would you do if this virus hit home?

The important thing to understand is the infection of bird flu is not necessarily a death sentence. Although a large number of deaths have occurred, almost half of those infected survived the disease. Therefore, with advanced medicine and proper care, a person may be able to live after bird flu.

What you do if someone you know is diagnosed will greatly depend on how well you know the person. Is it a friend? Acquaintance? Family member? Obviously, if it is a close friend or family member, you will want to be as supportive as possible. This will be a difficult time for them and any assistance you can provide will probably be greatly appreciated. On the other hand, if you are only dealing with an acquaintance, you may feel relieved and fortunate to have not suffered the same fate. While you may feel guilt at this thought, you can consider it a wake up call to bring the risk to your attention. You may also use this time to lend a helping hand, although you do not feel emotionally obligated to do so.

When someone you know becomes infected, you should also consider the source of the infection and the severity of the threat present. If a family member becomes ill while working on a family farm, you may ascertain infected agricultural animals are to blame and the threat must be alleviated. On the other hand, if no apparent cause is known, human to human contact may be a consideration. This is not only essential information for you to know, but also health professionals in your area. Currently human contact is not a transmission means; therefore, the onset of such would be of great concern.

The important thing to remember is to be there for your loved ones and feel blessed that you are available to help them as opposed to sharing their fate. You will, of course, want to be careful not to become infected during this time, if it can be avoided.

## What To Do If Someone You Know Is Diagnosed With Bird Flu

Sarah is an acclaimed writer on medical matters, and has written extensively on the subjects of Attention Deficit Disorder, Bird Flu and Cohn's Disease. For more of her articles, go to

<http://www.imedicalvillage.com>

now.

### **Bird Flu: A Few Facts**

**By Dylan Miles**

What is bird flu? What do you need to know about it? How does it affect you? Accurate and detailed information is available freely from medical professionals and on the Internet. As a brief introduction, below are some basic facts about bird flu.

#### 1. What is bird flu?

Avian influenza, or bird flu, is a contagious disease that affects chickens, ducks, turkeys, and other birds. Bird flu was first detected over 100 years ago and nowadays comes in a variety of about 20 strains. Most recently, outbreaks of the viral disease have been caused by the H5N1 strain, which is a particularly deadly strain of the virus.

#### 2. Can I be infected with bird flu?

The H5N1 strain of the flu, also called the Asian bird flu because it recently was detected in Asia, has a small risk level for human beings because it cannot be transmitted from one human being to another. A human being can only be infected from direct contact with a sick animal. It is possible that this could change and that the strain could evolve into a virus that can be transferred from one human to another. But this is not the case now.

#### 3. Is there a treatment for bird flu?

Professionals currently researching the Avian bird flu claim that rimantidine and amantidine, two cheap and popular flu drugs, have no power over the bird flu, but Relenza and Tamiflu, two other flu drugs, can indeed effectively treat the viral disease.

#### 4. Is there a risk of a bird flu epidemic?

Experts in this area suggest that rapid and extensive culling and quarantining of potentially infected animals is the best way to prevent an epidemic. Another option is vaccination of birds against the bird flu virus.

Dylan Miles, journalist, and website builder, lives in Texas. He is the owner and co–editor of

<http://www.immunbirdflu.info>

on which you will find a longer, more detailed version of this article.



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