

### **I live in an area where bird flu has been reported from poultry. How can I protect myself?**

- Avoid unnecessary contacts with live, sick and dead birds. Do not touch feathers and liquid waste of poultry, as these may have virus in large quantity.
- Remember, children are especially vulnerable. Therefore, prevent their coming in contact with poultry.
- If you see a sick or dying chicken, report immediately to the local concerned authorities.

### **I live in an area where bird flu has not been reported from poultry. How can I protect myself?**

- You do not need to worry about bird flu.
- If you see a sick or dying chicken report to the local concerned authorities and avoid contact with sick or dying chickens.

### **I live in an area where bird flu is being reported from poultry. Is it risky to visit the local market where live and slaughtered chicken are sold?**



- Yes.
- You must avoid such markets since poultry, their products and the objects which they have contaminated, especially cages can be a source of the infected virus.
- If you must go to such a market,

cover your nose and mouth with a mask and wash your hands immediately after finishing your task in the market.

### **I live in an area where bird flu is being reported from poultry. Should I avoid eating chicken?**

- Bird flu virus is killed in properly cooked food. While cooking, ensure that no part of the chicken remains pink.

- No case of bird flu has occurred till date due to ingestion of cooked food.

### **Can I get bird flu from eggs obtained from bird flu affected areas? How can I protect myself?**

- Eggs obtained from affected areas can have virus on their surface because of soiling with contaminated soil or excretions of poultry. Virus can also gain entry inside the egg.
- Wash the outer surface of the egg with soapy water and thoroughly cook the egg. Check that the yolk is not runny. Do not use raw eggs in any cooked preparation.
- Wash your hands thoroughly after cleaning or cooking the eggs.



### **Can I acquire infection from chicken and eggs obtained from an area that is free of bird flu?**

- No.
- It is advisable, however, to ingest well cooked food to ensure food safety.

### **What have I bought an undressed chicken from an affected area. Can I cook it at home?**

- Avoid it. This is extremely dangerous and requires complete respiratory protection in the form of mask, hand washing and proper disposal of feathers etc. It is strongly advised NOT to do it at home.
- The feathers and other body parts of the chicken could be contaminated with bird flu virus. Handling the chicken could result in aero-solization of the virus with a possibility

of getting it into your nose, eyes or mouth and causing disease.



### **I buy a lot of material for my kitchen. This includes chicken and eggs from affected areas. Is there a risk that other material I buy can get contaminated from chicken and eggs?**

- Yes.
- You must keep raw chicken and eggs separate from other food items.

### **What should I do with the vegetables that have been procured from bird-flu affected areas?**

- Vegetables may get contaminated with manure which may be rich in virus.
- Wash the vegetables properly, rinse in clean water for 15 minutes and wash again under running water.
- Wash your hands thoroughly after-wards.
- Wherever possible, cook vegetables properly.
- Steaming kills all viruses.

### **Does hand washing kill bird flu virus?**

- Proper hand washing destroys bird flu virus.
- Hand washing is best performed using soap and warm running water.
- Ensure that all areas of the hand have been washed properly.
- Wash hands for a minimum of 15 to 20 seconds. It gives adequate time for the soap to kill the virus.
- After washing, pat dry the hands.



### **I don't have soap or water, how can I make my hands free of bird flu virus?**

- Use a 70% alcohol – based hand rub solution. Use sufficient quantity to completely cover your hands.
- Wash your hands using running water and soap as soon as these become available.
- Please note that alcohol rub only destroys germs. It does not clean the hands. Hand washing does both.

### **How can I protect myself from a patient of bird flu?**

- Stay away from the patient while coughing/sneezing. If possible, cover your nose with tissue paper or a piece of cloth.
- Do not shake hands and do not touch the objects which have been handled by the patient. If you do so, immediately wash your hands.
- Ask the patient to stay home and follow the advice of the doctor.

### **How can I clean the objects and surfaces that have been touched by a patient of bird flu?**

- Wipe clean with a disinfectant such as Lysol, sodium hypochlorite and clean with soapy water.
- Wash your hands afterwards.

### **How should I suspect that I or one of my family members is having bird flu?**

- Currently, bird flu is to be suspected when flu-like symptoms (fever, cold, body ache, running nose and/or eyes, loss of appetite) occur in a person who has recently come in contact with poultry in a bird-flu affected area.
- Immediately seek professional advice, preferably at home.

### **Can I look after my relative at home who is suffering from bird-flu like illness?**

- Yes, certainly.
- Wear a mask to protect yourself.
- Clean all surfaces that come in contact with the hands or secretions of the patient with soap, Lysol, sodium hypochlorite etc.
- Do not allow the patient to go out. Restrict the number of people attending him.
- Follow the advice of medical personnel.

### **If the pandemic sets in, what should I do?**

- Do not PANIC.
- Follow the instructions of national public health authorities.
- Make a plan for emergency supplies, prepare a roster of people who should be contacted and develop a contingency plan for your business.
- Remember, a pandemic is likely to cause social disruption and strict measures such as social distancing and travel restrictions may be imposed by national authorities. Follow these.



### **Can I visit countries where bird flu is reported from poultry and/or humans?**

- No travel restrictions have been suggested so far. It is safe to visit any affected country.
- While visiting these countries, avoid contact with poultry. Do not visit markets where chickens are slaughtered and sold and adopt good hygiene practices.



# Preventing Bird Flu:

## Some Questions and Answers