

HPAI (BIRD FLU)

Practical Advice for Bird Owners



Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI H5N1, often called “bird flu”) has now been detected in Western Australia.

While the overall risk to most companion birds remains low, the presence of active cases on the Australian mainland serves as an important reminder that good biosecurity practices play a key role in reducing the risk of disease transmission.

For most pet bird owners, simple biosecurity measures will significantly reduce the risk to their birds. We remain committed to providing care for companion birds and will continue to adapt our protocols as new information becomes available.

The information provided in this guide is intended to help bird owners understand the current situation and implement practical steps to help keep their birds safe.

Protecting Companion Birds

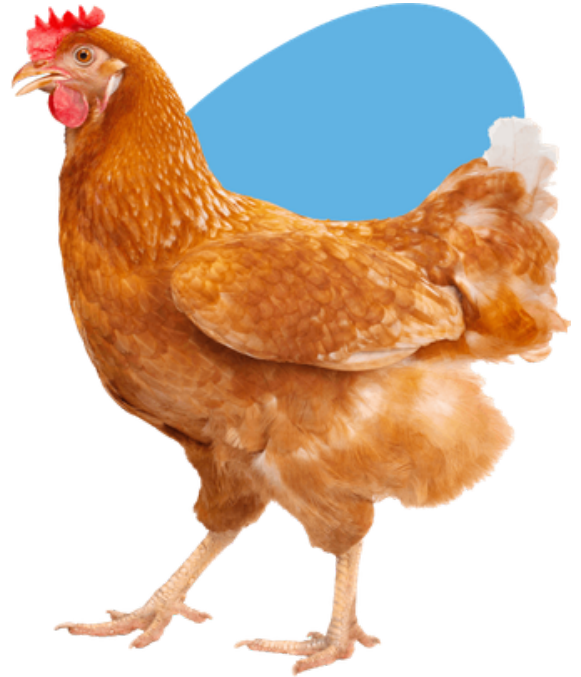
- Keep birds indoors wherever possible.
- Prevent direct contact with wild birds.
- Avoid allowing birds outside in areas frequented by waterfowl, seabirds or other wildlife.
- Wash hands before and after handling birds.
- Avoid sharing cages, carriers or equipment between households.
- Avoid feeding wild birds around your property.



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Protecting Backyard Poultry

- Prevent all contact between poultry and wild birds. The easiest way to do this is to keep backyard poultry confined to their coop, preventing free-ranging.
- Cover feed and water sources so they cannot be contaminated by wild birds – this might mean putting a roof on your chicken coop and making it "bird proof" with netting or bird wire.
- Restrict access to ponds, dams and natural water sources used by wild birds.
- Have dedicated footwear for your poultry areas (change shoes before and after servicing your chickens).
- Wash hands after handling birds, eggs or equipment.
- Avoid introducing new birds to your flock.



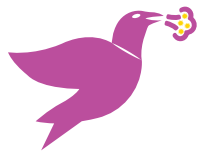
What about Dogs and Cats

- Do not allow dogs, cats or other pets to investigate, handle or consume sick, injured or dead wild birds.
- Keep cats indoors where possible and supervise dogs when walking in areas frequented by waterfowl or seabirds.
- Avoid contact with bird droppings, feathers or carcasses.
- If you find a sick or dead wild bird, do not handle it yourself. Contact the Emergency Animal Disease (EAD) Hotline (1800 675 888) (24/7 availability) and report it.
- Wash your hands thoroughly after any unavoidable contact with wildlife or bird-contaminated environments.

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Signs and Symptoms in Birds

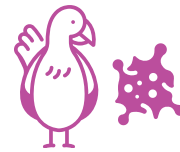
If multiple birds become sick or die unexpectedly, this should be reported immediately via the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888.



Difficulty breathing



Nasal or eye discharge



Vomiting, regurgitation or nausea



Neurological signs (head tilt, tremors, seizures, incoordination)



Severe lethargy



Sudden death within a flock

UPV Preventative Measures

To reduce the risk of introducing HPAI into our hospitals, we have implemented enhanced biosecurity protocols, including:



Pre-appointment avian screening questions



Enhanced cleaning and disinfection protocols



Enhanced triage procedures



Additional PPE requirements for some avian presentations



Dedicated assessment pathways for higher-risk birds



Ongoing monitoring of government advice