

Information for Farm Workers Exposed to H5N1 Bird Flu in U.S. Dairy Cows or Other Animals

H5N1 bird flu is a virus that has recently been detected for the first time in cows and can be found in poultry and other animals. The virus can infect people who work with infected animals or their byproducts (for example, raw milk), such as dairy and poultry workers. This virus has been found at high levels in the raw milk of infected dairy cows and also in the lungs, muscle, and udder tissue of infected dairy cows. This virus is spreading among dairy cows and poultry flocks, in multiple U.S. states.

If you work with animals or materials that could be infected or contaminated with H5N1 bird flu, you can take steps to reduce your risk of getting sick. Consult your supervisor or your employer's health and safety committee to determine how best to apply these recommendations.

How H5N1 virus spreads from infected cows or other animals to people

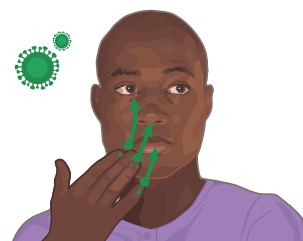
This virus could spread from cows to people in several ways:

- If you touch something contaminated with the virus and touch your eyes, nose, or mouth;
- If a liquid contaminated with live virus splashes into your eyes (like raw cow's milk from an infected cow, for example);
- If you eat, drink, or inhale droplets contaminated with virus; or
- If you handle sick or dead barn cats or other animals infected with the virus.

H5N1 Bird Flu Spreads from Cows to People in Several Ways



If you touch something contaminated with live virus and then touch your eyes, nose, or mouth



If a liquid contaminated with live virus splashes into your eyes (like raw milk from an infected cow, for example)

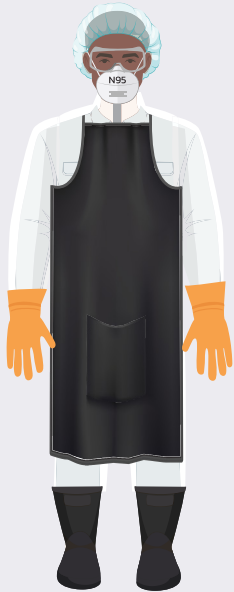


If you eat, drink, or inhale droplets contaminated with live virus

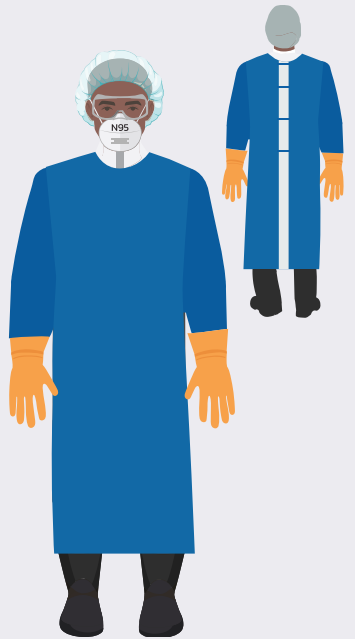


Wear personal protective equipment (PPE)

For H5N1 Bird Flu Protection



For H5N1 Bird Flu Protection in a Milking Parlor



You should wear personal protective equipment (PPE) when in contact with or around dairy cows, raw milk, other animals, or surfaces and other items that might be contaminated with virus. Ask your supervisor if you have questions about what type of PPE to wear or when or how to use it. Recommended PPE may include:

1. Head cover or hair cover
2. Safety goggles
3. Optional face shield over the top of goggles
4. NIOSH Approved® particulate respirator (such as an N95®)
5. Coveralls that keep you dry
6. Optional waterproof apron over the top of the coveralls
7. Disposable gloves with optional outer work gloves
8. Boot covers or boots

In milking parlors, where the source of contamination is only from one side, you may be able to use a sleeved apron in place of the coveralls and waterproof apron.

More information on worker safety and putting on and removing PPE is available at <https://www.cdc.gov/bird-flu/prevention/farm-workers.html>. When working with animals or materials that could be infected or contaminated with H5N1 bird flu, monitor your health and continue to monitor for 10 days after your last exposure.

The milking parlor option is for limited settings, where the source of contamination is only from one side. **Talk to your supervisor to know if this applies to you.**

Symptoms can include:

- Eye redness (conjunctivitis)
- Mild flu-like upper respiratory symptoms
- Pneumonia requiring hospitalization
- Fever (Temperature of 100°F [37.8°C] or greater) or feeling feverish
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

Less common signs and symptoms include diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, or seizures. *Fever may not always be present.

Observe your health daily, even if you followed all instructions for PPE.

If you get any new symptoms of illness while working with confirmed or potentially infected animals or confirmed or potentially contaminated byproducts or surfaces **and during the 10 days** after your last exposure:

- Stay home and stay away from others as much as possible until you know whether you have H5N1 bird flu. If you have H5N1 bird flu, stay home and away from others until you feel better.
- Tell your supervisor and medical provider, and they will help you contact your [state/local health department](#).
- Your health department will help you determine what to do next and may test you for H5N1 bird flu.
- A medical provider may prescribe medication that is used for [treatment of flu](#) (antiviral medication). It is important to follow the directions for taking the medication.

For more bird flu (H5N1) resources, visit [cdc.gov/birdflu](https://www.cdc.gov/birdflu)