



Protect your birds against bird flu and disease

Keeping poultry and birds is a popular past time for many Australians and keeping them disease free is important.

The risk of bird flu reaching Australia is low, but it remains a threat and all bird owners need to keep watch for signs of the disease.

The signs to look for include:

- ruffled feathers
- unusual head or neck posture
- inability to walk or stand
- reluctance to move, eat or drink
- droopy appearance
- swollen head, wattle or comb
- a drop in egg production
- respiratory distress
- diarrhoea
- sudden death.

Which species are affected?

All bird species are thought to be susceptible. It can affect more than 140 species including chickens, ducks, turkeys, pheasants, partridges, quail, geese, guinea fowl, ostriches and many wild birds.

What can I do?

Bird owners have a vital role in preventing disease outbreaks, whether it's bird flu or other bird diseases. The following simple steps will help stop disease outbreaks in your birds:

- regularly clean your aviary, poultry yard and farming equipment
- don't let your birds mix with wild birds

- don't let your birds' feed and water become contaminated by droppings or other animal waste
- your birds' drinking water should be town, bore or chlorinated water
- if you go to bird shows don't allow your birds to mix directly with others
- practice good personal hygiene after handling birds and also when handling poultry meat and eggs – always wash your hands with soap and hot water
- if visitors need to handle your birds make sure they wash their hands with soap and hot water before and after handling your birds
- keep new birds or show birds separated for 10 days before introducing them to your existing flock
- if you sell eggs, where possible use new cartons as pre-used cartons can spread disease – if you use pre-used cartons keep them clean and away from birds
- know the signs of disease
- immediately report large numbers of sick or dead birds.

Reporting unusual symptoms

If you see any unusual symptoms in your birds or find that several of them have died within a short period of time, be on the safe side and report it immediately.

Report to your local veterinarian, or local department of primary industries or agriculture, or the emergency animal disease hotline on **1800 675 888**.