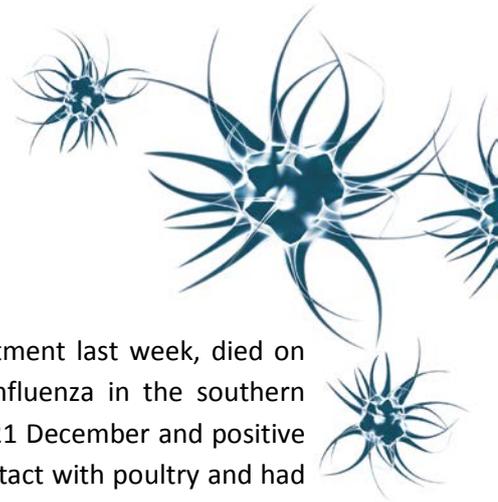


3 January 2012

Update of Hong Kong H5N1 Avian Influenza Outbreak



A bus driver who was in critical condition and receiving emergency treatment last week, died on Saturday. He was reported to be tested positive for the H5N1 avian influenza in the southern Chinese city of Shenzhen. The patient was hospitalised with fever on the 21 December and positive test result was noted on the 30th December. The patient had no direct contact with poultry and had not travelled out of Shenzhen during the month prior to his sickness. There had been no other cases of H5N1 infection reported. There has not been any documented human to human transmission of H5N1 infection in the current H5N1 development.

Recommendations to prevent infection are as follows (Adapted from 'Preventing Bird Flu: Some Questions and Answers' from World Health Organisation) if you are travelling to Hong Kong:

1. 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.
2. Avoid markets where live and slaughtered chicken are sold since poultry, their products and the objects which they have contaminated, especially cages can be a source of the infected virus.
3. 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.
4. 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.

5. 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.
6. 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.



7. When you do not have water and soap, you can 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.
8. Stay away from patients who are 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 suspected patient. If you do so, immediately wash your hands. Avoid crowded places as much as you can.
9. Consult medical advice if you develop flu-like symptoms (fever, cold, body ache, running nose and/or eyes, loss of appetite).

