

**IN THIS ISSUE: AVIAN INFLUENZA A (H7N9) IN CHINA**

**CDC ISSUES AVIAN FLU (H7N9) TRAVEL NOTICE FOR TRAVEL TO AND FROM CHINA**

**Travel notice**

On January 25, 2017, CDC issued a travel notice for China due to avian influenza A (H7N9). This is a “Watch Level – 1 Practice Usual Precautions” travel notice; there are no recommendations against travel to China. There may be increased travel to and from China during the Chinese Lunar New Year (January 28, 2017). The travel notice is available at:

<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/watch/avian-flu-h7n9>.

**Avian influenza A (H7N9) in China**

China has reported 120 confirmed cases of human avian influenza A (H7N9) between September 2016 and January 16, 2017. Most patients had exposure to live poultry or poultry markets. While most infections occurred in China, a few infections occurred among travelers to China.

**BACKGROUND ON AVIAN FLU (H7N9)**

Infection with avian influenza A (H7N9) was first reported in China in March 2013. Since that time there have been 918 lab-confirmed human cases. While early symptoms tend to resemble seasonal flu (e.g., fever, cough, sore throat), infection with A (H7N9) often causes severe respiratory illness. Approximately one third of cases have died; however, mild illness can occur. Avian influenza A (H7N9) circulates in poultry in China and most human infections occurred after exposure to poultry. Person-to-person spread has occurred in China but is rare. Additional information on A (H7N9) is available at

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/h7n9-virus.htm>.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Clinicians should consider the possibility of avian influenza A (H7N9) virus infection in people presenting with respiratory illness within 10 days of travel to China, particularly if the patient reports exposure to birds or poultry markets. **If you suspect your patient may have avian influenza A (H7N9) contact Washoe County Health District immediately, including nights or weekends, at 775-328-2447.** Airborne, droplet, and contact precautions should be instituted.

**TESTING**

Rapid influenza diagnostic tests are not recommended if A (H7N9) is suspected. Preferred specimens include (i) a nasopharyngeal swab, or (ii) a nasal aspirate or wash, or (iii) two swabs combined into one viral transport media vial (e.g., nasal or nasopharyngeal swab combined with an oropharyngeal swab); a lower respiratory tract specimen may also be requested depending on the patient’s clinical presentation. The Washoe County Health District will provide guidance for specimen collection. CDC has also provided guidance at <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/h7n9/specimen-collection.htm>.

**PREVENTION**

Travelers to China can take several precautions to protect themselves. If you have a patient who will be traveling to China, please provide them with the following recommendations:

- Don’t touch birds and avoid poultry markets.
- Eat food that is fully cooked.
- Wash hands frequently with soap and water; hand sanitizer (≥60% alcohol) can be used if soap and water are not available.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or your sleeve.
- If you become ill after travel to China consult your doctor and mention your travel to China.
- Avoid contact with others while you are ill.