



## **Prevention of Avian Influenza**

*This Circular substitutes Special Circular No. 31/2008 issued on 15 December 2008.*

Avian Influenza (H5N1) is a type of influenza A that mainly infects birds but occasionally affects humans. Avian Influenza can be transmitted from live birds to people, although transmission between humans is very inefficient. The initial symptoms of avian flu are similar to those of other influenza viruses, including fever, generalised muscle pain, cough and sore throat. However, it is more likely to result in high fever, chest infection, respiratory failure, multi-organ failure, and death.

Members are advised to adopt the following precautionary measures to reduce the risk of being infected by Avian Influenza:

- Avoid touching live poultry or their droppings.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with liquid soap and water immediately after touching live poultry, birds or their droppings.
- Cover mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing, and then wash hands thoroughly.
- Keep hands clean and wash hands properly. Dry hands thoroughly either with a clean cotton towel, a paper towel, or a hand dryer. Towels should never be shared.
- Build up good body immunity by having a balanced diet, regular exercise, adequate rest and avoid overstress.
- Members feeling unwell, especially with flu-like symptoms, should avoid meetings or activities. They should seek medical advice, stay at home and take rest.

In the course of meetings and activities, Scouter-in-charge should strengthen the precautionary and contingency measures as follows:

- Avoid organising meetings and activities at crowded or poorly ventilation places, or places that may expose members to live birds and poultry.
- Keep sufficient face masks for use when needed.
- Enhance the hygiene facilities of the Unit headquarters, keep the environment clean and maintain good ventilation.
- If your Unit headquarters is situated in countryside or has an outdoor garden, please instruct members not to feed wild birds in order to reduce the chance of attracting them to stay and rest.
- Leaders should call the Government hotline at 1823 for advice on handling sick, wounded or dead birds found in Unit headquarters premises and establish barriers to prevent members from touching the birds. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department will collect the birds for laboratory examination, where necessary.
- If a member is found to have symptoms of respiratory infection, the leader should instruct the member to wear a face mask and contact his/her parents as soon as possible for prompt medical treatment. The attendance list should be kept properly in case of follow-up actions required.

For more health advice on the prevention of Avian Influenza, please visit website of the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health ([www.chp.gov.hk](http://www.chp.gov.hk)) for details.

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