

DSHS Reports First Human Case of Avian Influenza in Texas

 NEWS RELEASE

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Person Had Direct Contact With Dairy Cattle

The Texas Department of State Health Services is reporting a human case of avian influenza A(H5N1) virus in Texas. The case was identified in a person who had direct exposure to dairy cattle presumed to be infected with avian influenza.

The patient, who experienced eye inflammation as their only symptom, was tested for flu late last week with confirmatory testing performed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention over the weekend. The patient is being treated with the antiviral drug oseltamivir. The case does not change the risk for the general public, which remains low.

According to the CDC, this is the second human case of H5N1 flu in the United States and the first linked to an exposure to cattle. In March, the [Texas Animal Health Commission announced](#)  the first cases of avian influenza A(H5N1) in dairy cattle in the Texas Panhandle. DSHS is working with TAHC, CDC and other state and federal health agencies to investigate the human and animal cases and understand how the virus is spreading in order to protect livestock and people who work with it.

Avian influenza A(H5N1) is a type of flu virus that usually infects wild birds and can spread to domestic birds and other animals. It occasionally infects people, though it is extremely rare for it to be transmitted from one person to another. Initial testing shows the virus has not changed in a way to make it more likely to spread among humans.

The cattle infections do not present a concern for the commercial milk supply. Dairies are required to destroy or divert milk from any sick cows, plus pasteurization kills avian flu viruses.

DSHS is providing guidance to affected dairies about how to minimize workers' exposure and how people who work with affected cattle can monitor for flu-like symptoms and get tested. Illnesses in people with H5N1 flu infections have ranged from mild, such as eye infection and upper respiratory symptoms, to severe, such as pneumonia and death.

DSHS has issued a [health alert](#) asking health care providers around affected dairies to be vigilant for possible human cases and is providing testing and treatment recommendations.

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(News Media Contact: Chris Van Deusen, Director of Media Relations 512-776-7119)