

## Avian Influenza (H5N1), information for those who may have been exposed to infection

### Why have I received this information?

There is a risk that you have been exposed to infection with avian influenza (H5N1).

### What is avian influenza (H5N1)?

Avian influenza (H5N1) is a viral disease caused by the influenza A virus subtype H5N1. The avian influenza virus is normally found in wild aquatic birds that carry the virus without being sick. If the infection is spread to a poultry flock (poultry farm), the poultry can become severely ill with high mortality rates. In rare cases, the influenza A (H5N1) virus can be transmitted to mammals and humans and can cause a serious infection, often more severe than regular seasonal influenza.

### How is avian influenza (H5N1) transmitted?

It is most common for a person to become infected through close contact with sick or dead land fowl. Transmission can also occur from other wild or domestic birds and probably also from diseased mammals, such as minks.

Influenza virus A (H5N1) is not easily spread between people. In rare cases, infection can occur through close contact with a sick person with respiratory symptoms.

### What should I consider?

- You should pay close attention to symptoms for 10 days from the day you were last exposed to the infection.
- If you have symptoms that could be due to avian influenza, you have **suspected** avian influenza (H5N1). Then you are obliged under the Swedish Communicable Diseases Act to contact your healthcare provider. You are also obliged to protect other people from infection by keeping your distance and following the rules of conduct you will be given.
- If you do not develop any symptoms, you should notify your doctor/contact tracer as agreed.

Examples of symptoms that can be caused by avian influenza (H5N1):

- respiratory symptoms (cough, sore throat, shortness of breath)
- influenza-like symptoms such as fever, headache, muscle ache
- pronounced weakness and fatigue
- eye inflammation
- gastrointestinal symptoms (diarrhoea, vomiting).

You should also consider the following:

- For 10 days from the day you were exposed, you should not have contact with birds and mammals that have not been exposed.
- If you need to handle sick and dead birds or mammals, you should wear personal protective equipment: gloves, protective coveralls, safety shoes/boots, FFP3 respirator and safety glasses or a face shield.

### **About the information sheet**

The information sheet was produced by the Swedish Association of County Medical Officers and is valid nationally.

### **Contact details of healthcare providers**

In case of symptoms, please contact

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Telephone number .....

Explain that you have received this information sheet and describe your symptoms.