



PRECAUTIONS AROUND POULTRY

Zoonoses are diseases that can be spread between animals and humans.

The simple precautions below can help minimize disease risks for you and your birds.

Hand Washing

Hand washing is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of disease.

- Wash hands often when around poultry, especially:
 - **AFTER** – direct contact with animals, manure, or equipment used in their environment
 - **BEFORE** – preparing or eating food, or having contact with infants or young children
- Use warm water and soap. Lather and scrub at least 20 seconds (sing the Happy Birthday song twice).
- Supervise children to ensure proper hand washing.
- Alcohol hand gels can be used if hands are not visibly dirty.

Avoid Entry Into Your Body

Germs that enter your body can cause disease. Protect your face and skin around poultry or coops.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth when you are around birds, until hands can be washed.
- Do not eat or drink around poultry or housing areas.
- Keep any cuts, scrapes, wounds, even chapped or dry skin covered when you are around poultry.
- Promptly clean any scratches or peck injuries received when working around poultry.
 - Monitor the wound for signs of infection (e.g., redness, swelling, oozing). If seen, contact a healthcare provider.
- Wear washable boots and coveralls when working around birds, and remove them before entering the home.
- Wear disposable gloves when cleaning poultry areas. Wash your hands after you are finished.
- If dust is generated, such as when sweeping, wear a mask to prevent entry into your nose.

Children and Livestock

Young children are at greatest risk for illness and should always be supervised around poultry.

- Do not allow children under 5 to have contact with young chicks or ducklings to avoid the risk for *Salmonella*.
- Do not let children put their hands or objects (e.g., pacifiers) into their mouths around poultry or coops.
- Do not house poultry, especially baby birds, in your home.

Keep Animals Healthy

Work with your veterinarian to develop the best health program for your flock.

- Keep birds up to date on vaccines and parasite control.
- Monitor birds daily for illness.
- Isolate ill birds and contact your veterinarian.
- Control dust in poultry areas to avoid damage to the respiratory tract and the risk of airborne disease.

Keep Animal Areas Clean

Zoonotic disease organisms can be shed in poultry feces.

- Remove poultry feces and litter frequently.
- Keep nest boxes and bedding clean and dry
- Replace bedding in nest boxes routinely (at least weekly) to keep eggs clean.
- Keep feed and water fresh and containers clean.

Handle Eggs the Right Way

- Gather eggs frequently (e.g., daily, or more frequently, when possible) to reduce contamination with feces.
- Discard any broken or cracked eggs.
- Always wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water after handling fresh eggs
- For more information on egg handling safety, visit <https://www.cfsph.iastate.edu/Assets/tipsheet-cd-eggs.pdf>.

Avoid Disease Vectors

Insects, ticks and waterfowl can carry disease organisms that can harm you or your livestock.

- Use an effective vector control programs for your poultry.
- Do not let poultry interact with waterfowl.
- Eliminate standing water sources (e.g., old tires, barrels) to prevent breeding areas for mosquitoes.
- Protect yourself from bites from ticks and mosquitoes.
- When possible, avoid being outdoors during peak vector activity times (e.g., dusk and dawn) or wear EPA-approved insect repellants.

To learn more about zoonotic diseases and prevention measures, visit <https://www.cfsph.iastate.edu/zoonoses>.