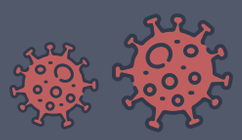
# Information on Avian Influenza (bird flu)

## WHAT IS AVIAN INFLUENZA AND WHY IS IT IN THE NEWS?

**Avian influenza (bird flu)** is a virus often carried by and transmitted between birds.

This spring, **a highly pathogenice version of avian influenza (subtype H5N1) is spreading** in North America and is known to impact ducks, seabirds, and geese.

The **risk for people is very low**, but transmission from birds to humans has happened on rare occasions, following close contact with infected birds or contaminated blood, feces, and particles in the air.



## RESULTS FROM A SNOW GEESE STUDY AT LAVAL UNIVERSITY

**To monitor avian influenza, researchers from Laval University captured geese** in spring 2022 during their migration in southern Québec.

**Geese were tested for avian influenza** before continuing their migration to Nunavik and Nunavut.

**In this study, researchers found no case** of the highly pathogenic avian influenza in the 200 geese tested.

However, snow geese tested outside of this study confirmed that **it is present in the snow goose population.**

Please report birds acting strangely or found dead to the Conservation Officer in your community.

## IS HUNTING SAFE?

**It is considered safe to hunt, handle, and eat healthy birds and eggs.**

The Public Health Agency of Canada recommends to:

- **Cook meat and eggs thoroughly**: no pink flesh and no runny yolks.
- **Work outdoors** upwind of birds and **use gloves** when preparing harvested birds or egg.
- **Wash hands, tools, and work surfaces** before and after handling, cleaning and cooking.
- **Eggs should be dry cleaned only** (water can affect the eggshell and allow germs to enter). **Throw away cracked eggs.**
- Avoid handling birds that you havent killed or that are acting strangely

**Wild birds and eggs are nutritious. Fully cooking ducks, geese and eggs reduce the risk of exposure to avian influenza.**

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