

Protecting Yourself from H5N1

H5N1 is a virus that can spread from animal to animal and animal to human, particularly during an outbreak.

Key Points to Remember

- **Contaminated sources:** The virus can be present in raw milk, animal fluids, or on surfaces.
- **Transmission methods:** H5N1 spreads through splashes, dust, or droplets in the air that can enter your eyes, nose, mouth, or lungs, potentially causing infection.
- **Surface contact:** Touching infected surfaces and then touching your face (eyes, nose, or mouth) can also spread the virus.
- **Protect yourself:** Always safeguard your eyes, nose, and mouth during high-risk tasks.

Taking appropriate precautions can reduce the risk of infection for you and your employees and families.

What You Can Do to Protect Yourself

Protect Your Face and Eyes

- Use indirectly vented goggles for optimal splash protection (more effective than face shields).
- Face shields can be used in addition to goggles to keep masks dry.

Wear Gloves

- Always wear gloves during high-risk tasks.
- Avoid touching your face while wearing gloves.

Practice Good Hygiene

- Wash or sanitize your hands frequently while working.
- Before leaving the farm, wash your hands and face thoroughly.

Change Contaminated Clothing

- Wear coveralls or bring a change of clothes.
- Leave potentially contaminated clothing on-site to avoid bringing the virus home.

Protect Against Airborne Virus

- Wear an **N95 respirator** (or better) to protect against inhaling airborne particles containing the virus.

Protect Your Feet

- Wear boots or foot coverings to minimize contamination risks.

It is especially important to you and your family's health to wear appropriate PPE during high-risk activities, including:

- Milking cows, handling raw milk, or cleaning the milking parlor.
- Caring for sick cows or cleaning their pens.
- Handling dead cows or cleaning their pens.



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The H5N1 virus is part of the Influenza A virus family, known for its ability to evolve rapidly.

The constant evolution makes it crucial to maintain awareness and implement protective measures to safeguard livestock and human health. By doing so, we can help prevent the spread of H5N1 and reduce the chances of it evolving into new strain.

Following these guidelines will help to protect everyone by also reducing the risk that you take the H5N1 virus home with you!

Information source:
Keeping our Farms Safe: Protecting Against H5N1- EXCITE H5N1 Factsheet