

# Influenza Pandemic

## Understanding Pandemic Influenza

Most of us have heard about the flu (or “influenza”). But what is bird flu and how is a flu pandemic different from seasonal flu? The following information helps to explain the difference between seasonal, avian and pandemic flu.

	Avian (Bird) Flu	Seasonal (Human) Flu	Pandemic Flu
<b>What is it?</b>	A disease caused by influenza viruses carried and spread among birds.	An infection caused by influenza viruses carried and spread among humans.	A new strain of influenza virus that spreads quickly worldwide. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is carried and spread among humans; and</li> <li>• humans have little or no immunity against it.</li> </ul>
<b>How does it spread?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wild birds are the main carriers.</li> <li>• Domestic birds (like chickens and turkeys) get the virus from wild birds and may become seriously ill.</li> <li>• Humans do not easily contract bird flu viruses.</li> <li>• Humans can only get bird flu by handling infected birds or coming into contact with contaminated feces.</li> <li>• There is no evidence that bird flu is passed by eating cooked poultry products.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breathing droplets that have been sneezed or coughed into the air by someone with the flu, or having the droplets land on the surface of your eye.</li> <li>• Shaking hands with an infected person or touching a contaminated surface, and then touching your own eyes, nose or mouth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spread the same way as seasonal flu.</li> </ul>
<b>What is the connection?</b>	<p>What is the connection between bird flu, human flu and pandemic flu?</p> <p><b>Bird flu + Human flu can = Pandemic flu</b></p> <p>One way pandemic flu can occur is if bird flu mixes with human flu and creates a new strain of flu virus that can spread easily from human to human.</p>		

### Notes

For additional information, visit us at [www.pandemicinfluenza.gc.ca](http://www.pandemicinfluenza.gc.ca) or call our toll-free number: | 800 454-8302

