

# INFLUENZA PREVENTION AND CONTROL: A ONE HEALTH PRIORITY

Influenza (“flu”) is a contagious respiratory disease caused by influenza viruses. Illness can be mild or severe, and anyone, from the very old to the very young, can be infected.

Animals, including birds, pigs, horses, and dogs can also contract influenza viruses. Even the environment plays a role in influenza; wild birds share viruses in their water habitats.

Humans and animals sometimes share influenza viruses. When this happens, it is typically with pigs or poultry. People’s symptoms are usually like those of seasonal human influenza.

Sometimes new viruses can spread quickly through the human population and can cause more serious disease. When an influenza virus spreads world-wide, it is called a “pandemic”.

## Human and Animal Laboratory and Public Health Activities Are Needed for Influenza Awareness

- Minnesota’s human and animal health laboratories gather information about the number and types of influenza viruses in the state.
- When unexpected or concerning flu viruses are found, public health, animal health, and wildlife professionals assess risk to humans and animals.
- Minnesota’s 2015 highly pathogenic avian influenza outbreak required a coordinated agency response.

## What Can I Do to Prevent Influenza?

- Wash hands, cover your cough, and stay home when sick.
- Get your seasonal influenza vaccine.
- Follow biosecurity recommendations from animal health agencies to keep you, your pigs and your poultry healthy.



## What is One Health?

One Health is the recognition that human, animal, and environmental health are interconnected.

Humans are at their healthiest when animals and the natural environment are well taken care of too.

The goal of One Health initiatives is to work collaboratively, across sectors, to improve the health of all.

