

Backyard Biosecurity

6 Ways To Prevent Poultry Diseases

1 Keep Your Distance.

Restrict access to your property and your birds. Consider fencing off the area where you keep your birds and make a barrier area if possible. Allow only people who take care of your birds to come into contact with them. If visitors have birds of their own, do not let them near your birds. Game birds and migratory waterfowl should not have contact with your flock because they can carry germs and diseases.



2 Keep It Clean.

Wear clean clothes, scrub your shoes with disinfectant, and wash your hands thoroughly before entering your bird area. Clean cages and change food and water daily. Clean and disinfect equipment that comes in contact with your birds or their droppings, including cages and tools. Remove manure before disinfecting. Properly dispose of dead birds.



3 Don't Haul Disease Home.

If you have been near other birds or bird owners, such as at a feed store, clean and disinfect car and truck tires, poultry cages, and equipment before going home. Have your birds been to a fair or exhibition? Keep them separated from the rest of your flock for at least 2 weeks after the event. New birds should be kept separate from your flock for at least 30 days.



4 Don't Borrow Disease From Your Neighbor.

Do not share lawn and garden equipment, tools, or poultry supplies with your neighbors or other bird owners. If you do bring these items home, clean and disinfect them before they reach your property.



5 Know the Warning Signs of Infectious Bird Diseases.

- Sudden increase in bird deaths in your flock
- Sneezing, gasping for air, coughing, and nasal discharge
- Watery and green diarrhea
- Lack of energy and poor appetite
- Drop in egg production or soft- or thin-shelled misshapen eggs
- Swelling around the eyes, neck, and head
- Purple discoloration of the wattles, combs, and legs (AI)
- Tremors, drooping wings, circling, twisting of the head and neck, or lack of movement (END)

Early detection is important to prevent the spread of disease.



6 Report Sick Birds.

Don't wait. If your birds are sick or dying, call your local cooperative extension office, local veterinarian, the State Veterinarian, or U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Veterinary Services office to find out why. USDA operates a toll-free hotline (1-866-536-7593) with veterinarians to help you. There is no charge for this service.



You are the best protection your birds have.