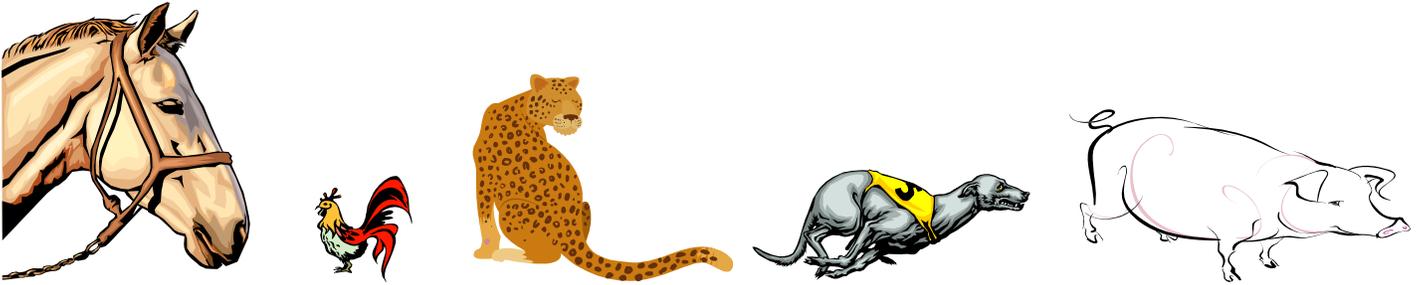


Animal Influenza



Q. Do animals get influenza or flu?

A. Yes. Flu is a respiratory illness in various animals. Influenza viruses affect several different animals, such as; horses, cats, dogs, birds, swine, and people. It is contagious and spreads rapidly among susceptible animals.

Many influenza A viruses infect poultry. Clinical signs are mainly in chickens and turkeys. Ducks are often asymptomatic.

Q. What are the symptoms of flu in animals?

Some animals show signs of an upper respiratory infection and others may not show any illness, but may be a source of the virus for susceptible individuals.

Q. Does animal influenza spread between various types of animals?

Influenza of horses usually remains in horses and bird flu generally stays in birds.

Q. How is flu in animals prevented?

Prevention requires hygienic management practices. Sick animals should be isolated and well animals vaccinated. For some influenzas, there is no vaccine.

Q. How is flu in animals treated?

There is no effective treatment, although antimicrobials may reduce secondary bacterial infections. Sick animals need rest and supportive care.

Influenza-specific antiviral drugs are not approved for the use in animals. These drugs can be expensive when treating an 800 pound horse.

Q. When did cats and dogs start getting flu?

Influenza was documented to cause of natural outbreaks of illness in cats and dogs the beginning of this century. It was seen in racing greyhounds in Florida and zoo cats in

Thailand. The cats were fed raw chicken carcasses infected bird flu. Dogs got influenza from horses.

Q. Can people get normal swine flu?

A. Swine flu viruses don't usually infect humans. There have been occasional cases, usually among people who've had direct contact with infected pigs, such as farm workers. Most human cases come from direct pig contact.

Q. What's different about the new swine flu?

A. We're not talking about the same bug. The virus is constantly mutating. People are worried as the current mutation contains parts of human virus, avian virus from North America and pig viruses from North America, Europe and Asia.

Also people with this swine flu have not had contact with pigs. CDC says it is spread from person-to-person.

The new swine flu virus has not been identified in any animals so far.

Q. Why are officials worried about this episode of swine flu?

- It mutated suddenly and people lack immunity to it
- It is being transmitted person-to-person
- It is spreading rapidly