



**For Immediate Release:**

April 30, 2013

## **HEALTH ADVISORY:**

### **Update: Avian Influenza A (H7N9) Virus**

LOS ANGELES – The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health is closely monitoring the avian influenza A (H7N9) virus situation in China. At this time, all cases to date have contracted the disease in Mainland China and no cases have been found in the United States.

On April 1, 2013, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported the first known human infections with a novel avian influenza A (H7N9) virus in China. As of April 29, 2013, a total of 126 cases have been reported, including 24 deaths. Cases have been reported in China from five provinces and two municipalities; one case has been reported from Taiwan in an individual who had recently traveled to China. The dates of illness onset range from February 19 to April 16, 2013. Direct contact with poultry has been identified as the major cause of infection. The H7N9 virus can be treated with the antiviral medications oseltamivir and zanamivir. Vaccine producers are also preparing to develop a vaccine in case one is needed.

For the latest updates on avian influenza A (H7N9) activity, please visit the WHO website: <http://www.who.int/csr/don/en/> or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/h7n9-virus.htm>.

Currently, no travel restrictions have been issued and it is safe to visit China. If you are traveling, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) continue to advise travelers and Los Angeles County residents to follow good hand hygiene and food safety practices and to avoid live animal markets and contact with live poultry while visiting China.

For general information about protecting yourself when traveling to China and other countries, please visit the CDC website at <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>.

**For those who are traveling to/from China and become sick, please follow the tips below:**

- If you become sick while you are still in China, visit the U.S. Department of State website at [http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/emergencies/emergencies\\_1195.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/emergencies/emergencies_1195.html) to find a list of local doctors and hospitals. Many foreign hospitals and clinics are accredited by the Joint Commission International. A list of accredited facilities is available at their website: [www.jointcommissioninternational.org](http://www.jointcommissioninternational.org).
- Delay your travel home until after you have recovered from your illness or your doctor says it is ok to travel.



- If you become sick with fever, coughing, or shortness of breath after you return to the United States, seek prompt medical attention. Be sure to tell your doctor about your recent travel to China.

Human infections with avian influenza are rare but do occur, most commonly after exposure to infected poultry (bird-to-human spread). Person-to-person spread of bird flu is thought to have occurred rarely in the past, most notably with avian influenza A (H5N1). Based on this experience, limited human-to-human spread of this H7N9 virus would not be surprising.

The Department of Public Health is committed to protecting and improving the health of the nearly 10 million residents of Los Angeles County. Through a variety of programs, community partnerships and services, Public Health oversees environmental health, disease control, and community and family health. Public Health comprises nearly 4,000 employees and has an annual budget exceeding \$750 million. To learn more about Public Health and the work we do please visit <http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov>, visit our YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/lapublichealth>, find us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/lapublichealth>, or follow us on Twitter: @LAPublicHealth.

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