



1. What is the avian influenza **A(H7N9)** virus?

Avian influenza A H7 viruses are a group of influenza viruses that normally circulate among birds. The avian influenza A(H7N9) virus is one subgroup among the larger group of H7 viruses. Although some H7 viruses (H7N2, H7N3 and H7N7) have occasionally been found to infect humans, no human infections with H7N9 viruses have been reported until recent reports from China.

2. What are the main symptoms of human infection caused by avian influenza **A(H7N9)** virus?

Most patients with this infection have had severe pneumonia. Symptoms include fever, cough and shortness of breath. However, information is still limited about the full spectrum of illness that infection with avian influenza A(H7N9) virus might cause.

3. How many human cases of avian influenza **A(H7N9)** virus have been reported in China to date?

New cases that are reported are now being compiled and posted daily. The most current information on cases can be found in [Disease Outbreak News](#).

4. Why is this virus infecting humans now?

We do not know the answer to this question yet, because we do not know the source of exposure for these human infections. However, analysis of the genes of these viruses suggests that although the viruses have evolved in birds, they may infect mammals more easily than other avian viruses.

