

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



**Rick Scott**  
Governor

**John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS**  
State Surgeon General & Secretary

**Vision:** To be the Healthiest State in the Nation

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH MONITORS OVERSEAS H7N9 BIRD FLU OUTBREAK**  
*~ Preparedness Plans in Place to Ensure Detection, Care~*

**TALLAHASSEE** – The Florida Department of Health (DOH) continues to closely monitor the influenza A H7N9 outbreak in China and is prepared to activate the agency’s pandemic response team should it be recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). No influenza A H7N9 cases have been reported in the United States, however, the Department is being proactive by highlighting CDC guidance for testing and diagnosis of influenza A H7N9 to health care professionals to ensure detection of possible cases in Florida and to provide the best possible care if needed.

“Our Department is actively monitoring developments in China with H7N9,” said Dr. John Armstrong, State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health. “Florida is ready to respond quickly to any public health crisis.”

According to the CDC, avian influenza A viruses usually do not infect humans, however, rare cases of human infection with avian influenza A viruses have been reported. Most human infections have occurred following direct or close contact with infected poultry and are not transferred from person to person.

Floridians traveling to China should follow some basic safety steps: wash hands often or use hand sanitizer; avoid contact with eyes, nose and mouth; eat meats and poultry products, including eggs, only if they have been cooked thoroughly; avoid touching animals, alive or dead, and stay away from farms, poultry markets, or other markets where animals are present.

If travelers returning from China become ill, they should advise their healthcare provider right away about their recent travel. Symptoms of influenza A H7N9 flu include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Travelers can visit [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel) for up-to-date information about CDC’s travel recommendations.

Additional information about the H7N9 virus is available by visiting <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/h7n9-virus.htm>

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