



COUNTY OF ORANGE HEALTH CARE AGENCY

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Precautions Urged for Travel Associated with Lunar New Year – Tieng Viet

(Santa Ana) – People traveling for the Lunar New Year to countries where avian influenza A (H5N1) cases have been reported are urged to take precautions before, during and after their travel.

Before traveling abroad, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at www.cdc.gov/travel for current travel health information. Make sure all of your routine and travel-related vaccinations are up-to-date and you have medications to prevent malaria if you are traveling to a malaria-endemic area. Pack a travel health kit containing your routine medications, basic first aid supplies, insect repellent and alcohol-based hand gels to clean your hands. Do not travel if you are sick.

The celebration of the Lunar New Year results in increased travel between the United States and many Asian countries. In the last year, human cases of avian influenza A (H5N1), or bird flu, have been reported in Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Egypt, Indonesia, and Vietnam. Most cases have had contact with poultry or other birds and very limited human to human transmission has been identified. Between 2003 and 2007, human cases of H5N1 were also seen in Azerbaijan, Djibouti, Iraq, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Thailand and Turkey. Additional countries in Asia, Europe and Africa have reported H5N1 infections in birds. While there are not any restrictions on travel to these countries, certain precautions are recommended:

- During travel, avoid direct contact with birds, including poultry and wild birds and do not visit poultry farms or bird markets where live birds are kept. Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, or use alcohol-based hand gels for hand cleaning when soap and water is not available. Make sure that all poultry products, including eggs, are thoroughly cooked before eating.

- After returning, monitor your health for 7 days. If you develop a fever with cough, sore throat or trouble breathing, contact your physician and provide information about your symptoms, where you traveled and if you had direct contact with poultry or with sick people.
- Orange County physicians treating patients with fever and respiratory symptoms who have traveled to areas with avian influenza A (H5N1) cases in humans or birds in the 7 days prior to the onset of symptoms should contact Public Health immediately at (714) 834-8180 to discuss appropriate testing.

To protect their overall health, travelers should take additional precautions such as prevention of mosquito bites, avoiding contaminated food and water, and avoiding contact with animals. See the CDC travel website for more information.

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