

Avian influenza death confirmed in Alberta

Jan 08, 2014 [Media inquiries](#)

Health Minister Fred Horne released the following statement today regarding Alberta's first rare and isolated case of avian influenza.

Results that were received from the provincial laboratory on Monday, and confirmed by the National Microbiology Laboratory on Tuesday, indicate that an Albertan has died from H5N1 avian influenza.

This individual travelled to China in December. Upon returning to Alberta, this person was admitted to hospital on Jan. 1 and passed away on Jan. 3.

"I would like to extend my condolences to the family for the loss of their loved one. I also want to thank our health care workers and our Chief Medical Officer of Health for their swift action and for their close co-ordination with the Government of Canada," said Health Minister Fred Horne.

"This is a very rare and isolated case," said Dr. James Talbot, Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health. "Avian influenza is not easily transmitted from person to person. It is not the same virus that is currently present in seasonal influenza in Alberta.

"Public health has followed up with all close contacts of this individual and offered Tamiflu as a precaution. None of them have symptoms and the risk of developing symptoms is extremely low. Precautions for health care staff were also taken as part of this individual's hospital treatment.

“I expect that with the rarity of transmission and the additional precautions taken, there will be no more cases in Alberta.”

In 2013, there were 38 world-wide cases of H5N1 avian influenza reported to the World Health Organization and 24 deaths.

Under the [Building Alberta Plan](#), our government is investing in families and communities, living within our means, and opening new markets for Alberta's resources to ensure we're able to fund the services Albertans told us matter most to them. We will continue to deliver the responsible change Albertans voted for.

Related information

Avian influenza resources:

[Alberta Health website](#)

[MyHealth.Alberta.ca](#)

[Canadian Food Inspection Agency](#)

[World Health Organization](#)

SOURCE: <http://alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=3565183693F2C-9E0D-1406-AF11D53248E7B8B2#media-contacts>