

Bird flu detected in 2 poultry workers in the UK; no transmission between people

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Two poultry workers in the U.K. have tested positive for bird flu, but they had no symptoms and there's no evidence of transmission between people, the Health Security Agency said Tuesday.

The two are the first humans to test positive for the [virus](#) in the U.K. since the agency announced a case of a 79-year-old English man who was infected after allowing ducks into his home.

The agency said bird-to-human transmission of avian flu had occurred in the U.K. only a small number of times prior to that January 2022 infection.

The poultry workers who tested positive for the H5 strain were believed to have been exposed to sick birds while working at the same farm, which was not identified.

Poultry farms were under order from November until mid-April to keep all birds indoors after [avian flu](#) was discovered on dozens of farms. Since October 2021, the U.K. has faced its worst outbreak of avian influenza, with hundreds of cases confirmed and millions of birds culled.

The positive tests were detected through screening of poultry workers exposed to infected birds. The two workers have since tested negative.

Precautionary contact tracing was being done, the agency said.

Susan Hopkins, chief medical adviser at the agency, said the level of risk to [human health](#) from [bird flu](#) was very low in the general population.

"Current evidence suggests that the avian influenza viruses we're seeing circulating in birds around the world do not spread easily to people," Hopkins said. "Globally, there is no evidence of spread of this strain from person to person, but we know that viruses evolve all the time and we remain vigilant for any evidence of changing risk to the population."

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