

## ~ **Mycoplasma gallisepticum (MG): Frequently Asked Questions** ~

### **What is Mycoplasma gallisepticum (MG)?**

[Mycoplasma gallisepticum](#) (MG) causes disease in chickens, turkeys, and game birds. The organism is transmitted during close contact between birds as well as on [fomites](#) (an inanimate object capable of carrying infectious organisms) and through the egg.

Infected chickens usually develop respiratory symptoms that may include [rales](#) (clicking, rattling or crackling noise heard in the lungs during inhalation), coughing, sneezing, nasal discharge, and shortness of breath.

Turkeys are more susceptible to MG than chickens, commonly developing severe clinical signs including sinusitis, respiratory distress, depression, decreased feed intake, and weight loss.

In game birds, MG is characterized by upper respiratory disease, weight loss, decreased egg production and death.

### **How can I protect my birds from MG?**

1. **Keep your distance-**
  - a. Restrict access to your poultry and your birds.
  - b. Only let caretakers have access to your birds. Your caretakers should not attend bird shows or other events where birds are present.
  - c. Provide visitors with boots to wear or have them clean their boots before and after their visit.
  - d. Game birds and migratory waterfowl should not have contact with your flock.
2. **Keep it clean-**
  - a. Keep a pair of shoes and a set of clothes to wear only around your birds or clean and disinfect your shoes and launder your clothes before you check on or work around your birds.
  - b. Scrubbing your shoes with a long-handled scrub brush and disinfectant will remove droppings, mud or debris.
  - c. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap, water and a disinfectant before entering your bird area.
3. **Don't haul disease home-**

- a. If you travel to places where other birds are present, even to the feed store, be sure to clean and disinfect car and truck tires, and other items that travelled with you.
  - b. When returning from the fair or exhibition keep the birds that went to exhibit separate from the rest of the flock for at least 2 weeks.
  - c. New birds should be kept separate from your flock for at least 30 days before putting them with the rest of your birds.
4. **Don't borrow disease from your neighbor-**
    - a. Don't share birds, lawn and garden equipment, tools or poultry supplies with your neighbors or other bird owners.
    - b. If you borrow these things, disinfect them before you bring them home and when you return them.
  5. **Know the warning signs of infectious bird disease-**
  6. **Report sick birds-**
    - a. Report signs of unusual illness among birds please contact your private veterinarian, the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) Avian Health Program at **1-800-606-3056**.

## **What do I do if my birds have MG symptoms?**

If your birds have MG symptoms contact your private veterinarian or the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) Avian Health Program at **1-800-606-3056**.