



# Fowlpox in Chickens



*Christine B. Navarre, DVM*

## **What is fowlpox?**

Fowlpox is a slow-spreading, viral disease that affects birds of all ages. It causes white lesions that developed into wart-like nodules and then form dark scabs on birds' combs and wattles.

There are two types of fowlpox: dry and wet. The dry pox is the type that forms nodules, and eventually scabs, on the comb, wattles, ear lobes, eyes and sometimes feet of chickens. The wet pox occurs in the oral cavity and upper respiratory tract.

## **How do chickens get fowlpox?**

The virus transmitted by direct contact with infected birds or by indirect contact with contaminated equipment, bedding, etc. It can also be spread by several species of mosquitoes.

## **Can fowlpox be treated?**

There is no treatment for fowlpox. Fortunately, bird deaths are uncommon unless the respiratory tract is severely affected.

The course of the disease in individual birds takes three to five weeks. Most birds will continue to eat and drink normally. Young birds may have retarded growth, and layers may decrease egg production. Birds that are affected by the wet type of fowlpox may have difficulty eating and breathing.

Once a flock is infected, the disease spreads slowly, and the flock will be infected for several months.

## **How is fowlpox controlled?**

The best way to control fowlpox is to keep it out of a flock by practicing strict biosecurity measures. Once a flock is infected, normal management and sanitation will not prevent fowlpox. Control is then accomplished by preventive vaccination. Chicks can be vaccinated at one day of age, and replacement chickens can be vaccinated at six to 10 weeks of age. Once chickens are vaccinated for fowlpox, they have permanent immunity.

### **What if my show birds have fowlpox?**

If fowl pox occurs in your exhibition show birds, they will not be admitted to shows while they are exhibiting signs of the virus. This policy is intended to protect your flock, as well as the flocks of the other exhibitors.

### **Can people get fowlpox?**

No. There is no zoonotic risk associated with fowlpox virus.

#### **Authors**

Christine B. Navarre, DVM  
School of Animal Sciences  
Louisiana State University Agricultural Center

Theresia Lavergne, Ph.D.

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