

Zoonotic Disease Guidance Chart BIRDS

Under the COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) Regulations, Schedule 3, the RSPCA is required to classify biological agents into specific hazard groups based on their potential impact on human and animal health. These classifications are as follows:

- **Hazard Group 1:** Agents unlikely to cause disease in humans or animals.
- **Hazard Group 2:** Agents that can cause disease in humans or animals and may pose a hazard to personnel. However, these are unlikely to spread to the broader community, and effective preventive treatments are typically available.
- **Hazard Group 3:** Agents that can cause severe disease in humans or animals, presenting a serious hazard to personnel. They may spread to the community, though effective treatments are generally available.
- **Hazard Group 4:** Agents that cause severe disease in humans or animals, present a significant hazard to personnel, are likely to spread within the community, and for which no effective treatment is usually available.

This classification is not exhaustive and does not encompass all zoonotic risks, as new diseases are continually being identified. Therefore, it is essential to implement rigorous hygiene and safety protocols to minimize exposure and reduce risks effectively.

Risk Level	Species	Disease/Zoonosis	Hazard Group	Transmission Types	Means of Transmission	Symptoms in Animals	Signs/Symptoms in Humans
High Risk	Psittacines, pigeons and doves, birds of prey, passerines, waterfowl, poultry, seabirds	Psittacosis (Chlamydia psittaci)	3	Inhalation	Inhalation of dust or faeces/nasal discharge from infected birds	Asymptomatic or respiratory signs (conjunctivitis, nasal discharge, swollen sinuses, difficulty breathing), depression, fluffed-up appearance, anorexia, diarrhoea, death	Flu-like illness, pneumonia, severe cases may lead to heart inflammation, hepatitis, and death
Low Risk	Gamebirds	E. Coli O157	3	Faeco-oral	Contact with dung and transfer to mouth via hands/arms	Asymptomatic to severe diarrhoea, CNS signs, septicæmia, death	Diarrhoea, kidney failure, potentially fatal
High Risk	Psittacines	Giardia	3	Oral, Faeco-oral	Direct contact with infected animals/humans, contaminated water/food, swimming in contaminated water	Asymptomatic or diarrhoea, weight loss, failure to thrive	Diarrhoea, abdominal cramps, bloating, flatulence
High Risk	Seabirds, gamebirds, passerines, waterfowl, poultry	Campylobacter	2	Faeco-oral	Ingestion of contaminated food or contact with infected animals	Asymptomatic or diarrhoea (yellow), weight loss, anorexia, placentitis, abortion in deer	Infectious diarrhoea, primarily affecting young children and the elderly
High Risk	Gamebirds, pigeons and doves, seabirds, birds of prey, passerines, psittacines, poultry	Salmonella	2	Oral, Faeco-oral	Foodborne or through faecally-contaminated soil/water	Septic arthritis, CNS signs, septicæmia, death	Mild self-limiting diarrhoea, occasionally severe
High Risk	Waterfowl, seabirds, poultry, birds of prey	Avian Influenza (H5N1, others)	3	Aerosol	Close contact with infected birds or products	Asymptomatic, sudden death, respiratory signs, diarrhoea	Flu-like symptoms, diarrhoea, vomiting, abdominal pain, chest pain, nose/gum bleeding
High Risk	Seabirds, gamebirds, pigeons and doves, birds of prey, poultry	Avian TB (Mycobacterium avium)	2	Aerosol, Oral, Direct Contact	Direct contact with infected animals/environments, inhalation, ingestion, skin wounds	Asymptomatic, skin lesions, chronic weight loss, granulomatous lesions	Cough, weight loss, lethargy, pulmonary disease, lymphadenitis, systemic infection
High Risk	Seabirds, gamebirds, passerines, waterfowl, poultry	Newcastle Disease	1	Direct Contact	Contact with infected birds or their products	Asymptomatic, neurological signs, excessive drinking/urination, diarrhoea	Conjunctivitis, fever, flu-like symptoms
Low Risk	Birds of prey, corvids, poultry, waterfowl	West Nile Disease	2	Vector-borne, Aerosol	Bite from infected mosquito; rare aerosol transmission	Depression, anorexia, weight loss, neurological signs, death	Fever, headache, body aches, rash, swollen lymph nodes; severe cases: stiff neck, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, paralysis