

BEING PREPARED FOR THE BIRD FLU

By Dr. Derek Conte

I have lately heard grave warnings in the news about the hellish conditions that will grip our country upon the arrival of the Avian (bird) flu, H5N1. The report went something like this: "There may be a need to quarantine people, reinforce the borders and close airports. We must prepare for food and gas shortages and there is the possibility of angry rioting. Worst-case scenarios suggest two million Americans could die."

There seems to be in the media and increasingly in the government a tendency to exaggerate. Remember Y2K, anthrax, small pox and SARS? So, before we overreact, let's take a small step back. What are the facts?

I looked up some statistics from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) on the Avian flu and also SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome). Total deaths from SARS worldwide the last four years: 812, "including no cases since April, 2004, with no known transmissions anywhere in the world," (updated 5/3/2006). Total deaths from Avian flu since first case 1997 in Asia: 65 (I'll remind you that over 3.6 billion people live in Asia). "Avian flu affects...ducks, chickens, pigs, whales, horses and seals...with transmission to humans rare...requiring

contact with poultry farms or markets or with an infected person from an affected country...there is no evidence of transmission beyond one person...there have been 200 confirmed cases total," (updated 4/24/2006). Many more people die in the U.S. each year from regular flu.

The rationale for the scary scenario is that the virus may mutate and more easily affect humans. But all viruses mutate, including the common cold, yet some

people never get colds because of their excellent immunological resistance. There is also risk of confusion in that the symptoms listed for Avian flu, SARS and regular flu are very much the same: fever of 100.4 or more, cough, sore throat, body aches, headache and respiratory symptoms. Diagnosis should come from a medical professional.

Everyone's health is their own concern and it is your responsibility to understand how best to safeguard it. Chiropractic care is an

excellent way to non-invasively boost the immune system response.

Dr. Derek Conte is a founding member of the new Chiropractic Specialists office at 1154 Concord Rd., Smyrna (corner King Springs) opening in June. He is available to speak to your group, free of charge. Call 404-784-6008.



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