

Disease Name:	Psittacosis (Avian Chlamydiosis)
Agent:	<i>Chlamydophila psittaci</i>
Clinical Signs:	<p>Birds: Many infected birds remain asymptomatic until they become stressed. The clinical signs may include lethargy, shivering, weight loss, breathing difficulties and diarrhea.</p> <p>Humans: The disease varies from a mild, flu-like illness which may include fever, chills, cough, weakness or fatigue, muscle and chest pain, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headache, sweating or abnormal intolerance to light.</p>
Susceptible domestic species	<p style="text-align: center;">Birds (wild/domestic), poultry, humans</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Occasionally reported in other mammals including dogs, cats, horses, cattle and muskrats</p>
Zoonotic?	Yes
Diagnostic tests:	Can be diagnosed by culture. A combination of techniques may be necessary. Easier to make a diagnosis in birds that are acutely ill.
Test sensitivity (false negatives)	Unknown
Test specificity (false positives)	Unknown
Vaccine available?	No
Excreted in :	Infection is acquired by inhaling dried secretions from infected birds, including contaminated feces and nasal discharge.
Mode of transmission:	<p>Birds: Can be transmitted between birds by the inhalation of infectious dust or airborne particles such as feathers and by ingestion of infectious material including carcasses. Also found in respiratory and oral secretions.</p> <p>Humans: Usually become infected after inhaling contaminated dust, feathers or aerosolized secretions and excretions. Direct contact with infected birds, including bites, can also spread the disease. Rare cases of person-to-person transmission have been reported.</p>
Disinfection	Routine disinfection after thorough cleaning is adequate. Disinfectants include accelerated hydrogen peroxide (Prevail, Peroxigard Plus), potassium peroxymonosulfate (Virkon, Trifectant), or chlorine bleach (1:32 dilution).
Incubation	Birds and Humans: can be as long as one month, but most infections become symptomatic in 5-14 days.
Post recovery shedding/Carrier state?	<p>Yes. In carriers, active disease can occur any time, and may be seen years after infection.</p> <p>Some birds carry the organism asymptotically, and can shed it intermittently for long periods (weeks to months). Shedding can be stimulated by concurrent infections or stressors such as nutritional deficiencies, handling, overcrowding or egg laying.</p>
Treatment:	<p>Birds: Antibiotics can be used to treat avian chlamydiosis, but some birds may remain infected. Prolonged treatment, with isolation of the bird, is necessary.</p> <p>Humans: Tetracycline antibiotics combined with supportive care.</p>
PPE Required	Gloves, gown, mask (N95)
Control	New birds should be examined for signs of illness, cages should be positioned so that nothing including feces, food or feathers is readily transferred between them. Cross-contamination between areas or units should be minimized. Good exhaust ventilation can help reduce the build-up of aerosols and prevent cross-contamination.