

Detailed guide: Newcastle disease: how to spot and report it

Updated: Contact details for reporting a notifiable disease updated.

Newcastle disease affects chickens and other captive and wild birds.

Humans aren't normally affected, but people in direct contact with infected birds may develop a very short-term eye infection, which passes without treatment.

The disease was last confirmed in Great Britain in 2006.

Newcastle disease is a [notifiable animal disease](#). If you suspect it you must report it immediately by calling the Defra Rural Services Helpline on 03000 200 301. In Wales, contact 0300 303 8268. In Scotland, contact your local [Field Services Office](#). Failure to do so is an offence.

Latest situation

If you keep poultry or birds, you must keep a close watch for, and report, any signs of Newcastle disease.

There's an [increased risk of the disease in the UK](#), with cases reported in 2018 in Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg. You can read our [assessment of the risk](#).

How to spot Newcastle disease

As the disease develops affected birds may show some of the following signs:

- respiratory distress such as gaping beak, coughing, sneezing, gurgling, rattling
- nervous signs characterised by tremors and paralysis and twisting of the neck
- unusually watery faeces (diarrhoea) that are yellowish-green in colour
- depression
- lack of appetite

Affected hens may also suddenly produce fewer eggs. Eggs that are laid may be soft-shelled.

The disease may lead to intense clinical signs, with a sudden onset leading to likely death. Or it may have a lesser affect, with breathing problems and lower egg production the only detectable clinical signs.

How Newcastle disease is spread

The disease is spread by direct contact with bodily fluids of infected birds, especially their faeces.

It can also be spread indirectly through people and objects that have been in contact with infected birds, or their excretions (such as faeces). Objects that can carry the disease include:

- vehicles
- equipment
- clothing
- water and feed

The disease can spread from wild to kept birds. Pigeons may carry [pigeon paramyxovirus](#), which can cause Newcastle disease in kept birds.

Preventing and controlling Newcastle disease

You can help prevent the disease by:

- vaccinating your animals against the disease – talk to your vet for advice
- [practising strict biosecurity](#) on your premises

If you report suspicion of Newcastle disease, APHA vets will investigate.

If the disease is confirmed, the outbreak will be controlled in line with the [contingency plan for exotic notifiable diseases](#) and the control strategy for notifiable avian diseases will be implemented.

Further information on prevention and control

[Controls to prevent disease](#)

[What happens when a notifiable disease is suspected or confirmed](#)

Legislation on Newcastle disease

Newcastle disease is covered by the [Diseases of Poultry \(England\) Order 2003](#).

[Detailed guide: Rabies in bats: how to spot it and report it](#)

Updated: Contact details for reporting a notifiable disease updated.

It is possible, although rare, for a bat infected with rabies to pass the disease on to other mammals, including humans.

The most recent case of rabies in a bat in Great Britain was in July 2018.

Rabies in bats is a [notifiable animal disease](#). If you suspect it you must report it immediately by calling the Defra Rural Services Helpline on 03000 200 301. In Wales, contact 0300 303 8268. In Scotland, contact your local [Field Services Office](#). Failure to do so is an offence.

Signs that a bat may have rabies

Infected bats may not show any signs of rabies. Infection can only be confirmed in a laboratory.

But clinical signs in bats may include:

- behaviour changes: infected animals are prone to more aggression
- disorientation and difficulty flying (infected bats may be injured as a result)
- eyes taking on a staring expression

How rabies is spread

Rabies is present in the saliva of infected bats and is usually spread by the bite of an infected bat.

The disease can also be spread if the saliva of an infected animal gets into open wounds or mucous membranes such as the nostrils, mouth and lips, eyelids and ears.

Risk to humans from infected bats

Humans can catch rabies from a bat, although this is very unusual as the disease is very rare among bats in Great Britain.

In humans symptoms of the disease include:

- anxiety, headaches and fever in early stages
- spasms of the swallowing muscles making it difficult or impossible to drink
- breathing difficulties

There are vaccinations against rabies, and the disease can normally be prevented if you are treated soon after exposure. But once signs of rabies appear, there is no treatment. Past human cases have been fatal.

Read the [NHS guide to rabies](#) for more information about the disease in humans.

How to avoid catching rabies from a bat

You should be vaccinated against rabies if you regularly handle bats.

If you have not been vaccinated against the disease:

- assume that all bats are possible carriers of rabies
- avoid touching bats, living or dead, whenever possible
- if you must touch a bat, [follow the Bat Conservation Trust guidance](#) and wear thick gloves to avoid being bitten or scratched

If you are bitten or scratched by a bat

If you have been bitten or scratched by a bat, or exposed to bat saliva or nervous tissue in any other way, you must:

- wash the wound or contact area with soap and water
- disinfect the wound
- contact a doctor immediately who will decide whether you need treatment

If you suspect rabies in a bat

If you suspect rabies in a bat or you see abnormal behavior in a bat [contact APHA](#) for help.

APHA vets will investigate and may submit the bat for testing to see whether the signs were caused by rabies.

If you find a dead bat

If you find a dead bat:

- do not directly handle the bat if possible
- if you have to touch the bat [follow the Bat Conservation Trust guidance](#) and use thick gloves
- follow the Bat Conservation Trust guidance on [what to do with the dead bat](#)

If your pet finds a bat

It is possible, although very rare, for infected bats to pass rabies to other animals including pets.

If your pet catches a bat, keep your pet under observation.

If your pet falls sick or starts behaving unusually, you must contact your vet immediately. Your vet will tell APHA if he or she suspects your pet has rabies.

Monitoring rabies in bats in Great Britain

APHA [tests dead bats submitted by the public](#) to monitor how widespread the disease is in Great Britain.

Only 21 infected bats have been found in more than 15,000 tests since 1986, so the risk of catching rabies from a bat is very low.

Site	Location	Dates
1	Newhaven, Sussex	1996
2	Carnforth, Lancashire	2002
3	Blackburn, Lancashire	2003
4	Staines, Surrey	2004
5	Abingdon, Oxford	2006
6	Craven Arms, Shropshire (3 cases)	2007, 2008 and 2014
7	Teddington, Surrey	2008
8	Linlithgow, West Lothian, SCOTLAND	2009
9	Newtown, Powys, WALES	2015
10	Skipton, Yorkshire	2016
11	Haydon Bridge, Northumberland	2016
12	Chesterfield, Derbyshire	2017
13	Peterborough, Cambridgeshire	2018
14**	Robertsbridge, East Sussex (5 cases)	2018
15	Rothbury, Northumberland	2018

** Once a positive case is confirmed at a site, we will not publicise further incidents there during the given year's 'bat season' – May to September.

Collection: Notifiable diseases in animals

Updated: Contact details for reporting a notifiable disease updated.

'Notifiable' diseases are animal diseases that you're legally obliged to report to the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), even if you only suspect that an animal may be affected.

Notifiable diseases can be:

- endemic – already present in the UK, such as bovine TB
- exotic – not normally present in the UK, such as foot and mouth disease

Some endemic and exotic diseases are zoonotic which means they can pass between animals and humans, such as rabies.

If you suspect a notifiable animal disease you must report it immediately by calling the Defra Rural Services Helpline on 03000 200 301. In Wales, contact 0300 303 8268. In Scotland, contact your local [Field Services Office](#). Failure to do so is an offence.

What happens if you suspect a notifiable disease

If you suspect an exotic notifiable disease:

1. Report it by calling the Defra Rural Services Helpline on 03000 200 301.
2. APHA vets will investigate – they usually visit your premises and carry out an enquiry. The APHA duty vet will tell you what restrictions should be applied to your premises before the APHA veterinary inspector arrives.
3. If the APHA veterinary inspector suspects a notifiable disease, they will take samples for testing (this may involve killing the suspected animal before taking samples).
4. They put restrictions on your premises. This means you must at least stop moving animals susceptible to the disease on or off the premises. It can also include stopping the movement of anything that can transmit disease, like meat products, equipment or vehicles.
5. If certain diseases are suspected (particularly foot and mouth disease or African horse sickness) a temporary control zone will be introduced around your premises. This restricts the movements of animals susceptible to the disease.
6. Restrictions remain in place until the investigation is complete and an exotic notifiable disease is ruled out.

What happens if a notifiable disease is confirmed

If a notifiable disease is confirmed:

1. Action will be taken on the infected premises to reduce the risk of the disease spreading, including movement restrictions. For some diseases, like foot and mouth disease and African swine fever, this will include culling all susceptible animals. Premises are then cleaned and disinfected with strict rules on restocking.
2. The government investigates where the disease came from and whether it has spread.
3. The government puts restrictions on all premises where the disease is likely to have spread from or to (for example when animals have been moved).
4. Further restrictions in a wider area may be introduced, depending on the risk of the disease spreading. In the case of foot and mouth disease in particular, animal movements would be restricted throughout the country. For some diseases control zones are automatically applied. APHA will

tell you what action to take – this depends on the nature of the disease and EU requirements.

5. The following activities that could spread disease may be banned:
- hunting or shooting
 - animal gatherings (like shows)
 - exports

Controlling exotic notifiable diseases

Contingency plans outline how the government will manage an exotic notifiable disease outbreak:

- [Contingency plan for exotic notifiable diseases for England](#)
- [United Kingdom contingency plan for exotic notifiable diseases of animals](#)

How to prevent notifiable diseases

You can help prevent notifiable diseases by following:

- [strict biosecurity practices](#)
- [rules on imports and exports](#)
- [rules on feeding to farmed livestock](#)

Animals or birds spared from culling

For most notifiable diseases, there are legal powers to cull animals to prevent the spread of disease during an outbreak.

Certain animals and birds, including breeds at risk, may be spared from culling if this doesn't compromise controlling the disease (this isn't guaranteed).

Find out more about [animals and birds that may be spared from culling](#).

Compensation when animals are slaughtered compulsorily

For some notifiable diseases, you may get [compensation if your animals or birds are compulsorily culled](#).

Get notified about exotic disease outbreaks

You can get the latest news about exotic notifiable disease outbreaks from the [APHA subscription service](#).

Collection: Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment: survey purpose and results

Updated: Amendments to body text.

The Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment (MENE) survey is funded by Natural England, with support from Defra.

The survey relates to engagement with the natural environment. By natural environment we mean all green, blue and open spaces in and around towns and cities as well as the wider countryside and coastline.

- The main focus of the survey is people's experiences of nature, including time spent on visits to the outdoors in the natural environment, away from home. By visits we mean discretionary time, ranging from a few minutes out of the home to an all day trip. Visits may include time spent close to home or further afield, potentially while on holiday in England. Routine shopping trips or time spent in a person's own garden are not included in the definition of a visit in MENE.

The data collected also includes other ways people engage with the natural environment. This includes activities such as time spent in private and communal gardens, watching nature programmes on television and undertaking pro-environmental activities such as recycling.

National Statistics

The UK Statistics Authority has designated MENE as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#)

Pre-release access list

The pre-release access order 2008 restricts who can see official statistics before they're published. The pre-release access list for MENE National Statistics accredited products was revised in May 2017 removing all pre-release access.

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Survey method

Fieldwork started in March 2009 with around 800 respondents interviewed every week across England using an in-home interview format. Every year at least 45,000 interviews are undertaken.

See the [MENE technical report](#) for details of the survey methodology including questions, frequencies, weighting, and estimates of margins of error.

How the survey is used

Natural England and its partners use the findings of the MENE survey to:

- inform their work, and that of other interested parties, to link it more closely to need
- evaluate the impact and effectiveness of this work
- measure the impact of policy intervention

Review

- Natural England is working with Defra to review MENE, to ensure that the survey builds on what we have learnt so far and asks the right questions to help meet future evidence and policy needs. Regular review is a key requirement of the Code of Practice for Statistics and we welcome engagement with users to ensure MENE meets their needs. If you would like to contribute to this review please email MENE@naturalengland.org.uk

Previous surveys

Reports and data are available for:

- [England leisure visits survey 2005](#)
- [GB leisure day visits survey 2002 to 2003](#)

Further information

Contact the responsible officer, Rose O'Neill, by email: MENE@naturalengland.org.uk for queries about the:

- reuse of survey data
- commissioning of bespoke analysis
- possibility of adding questions to the survey programme

Additional information is available in the [MENE web page](#) on Natural England's website archive.

Results, publications and data

Reports for the results of the MENE survey are available to view using the links at the bottom of this page.

MENE survey data

SPSS, .csv and Excel data files

The complete [datasets and metadata](#) from the first 9 years of survey fieldwork are available from Natural England's publication catalogue. These files were updated in September 2018 and also include additional weights and guidance notes.

The [MENE online cross-tabulation viewer](#) provides access to survey data for the period 2009-2016. Using this tool, the survey data can be cross-tabulated to pre-analyse the data by the required weights.

MENE reports

The 2018 headline report includes results from the 2016-17 and 2017-18 survey years. Published alongside the headline reports, are a Technical Report providing full details of the survey methodology, sampling, grossing and weighting and estimates of confidence intervals, and summary data tables in Excel.

[Guidance: Organic certification: list of UK approved organic control bodies](#)

Updated: Updated the address for Soil Association Certification Ltd (GB-ORG-05).

List of all approved certification bodies for organic food in the UK.

All foods sold as organic must originate from growers, processors and importers who are registered with an approved certification body and subject to regular inspection.