

Veterinary Update

**Animal Health and Welfare Branch/Office of the Chief Veterinarian for Ontario
Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs**

August 24, 2017

Confirmed Case of avian chlamydiosis in the Peel region, Ontario

The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) has been notified of a confirmed case of avian chlamydiosis in the Peel region.

A pet cockatiel purchased through a home-based business in Peel region tested positive for avian chlamydiosis.

Avian chlamydiosis was last reported in Ontario in 2014.

Avian chlamydiosis, caused by *Chlamydophila psittaci*, is a provincially immediately notifiable disease under the Animal Health Act (2009). Ontario animal health laboratories are required to report suspected or confirmed cases to OMAFRA.

Chlamydophila psittaci can also cause psittacosis in humans; therefore all suspected and confirmed cases of avian chlamydiosis are reportable to the Ministry of Health - Long Term Care and appropriate Public Health Unit under the Health Protection and Promotion Act (1990).

For this case, the Peel Public Health unit has been working with the caretaker of the affected bird to manage the disease. Peel Public Health advises anyone who may have recently purchased a bird from a home-based aviary or an online marketplace to take the bird to a veterinarian for further examination and testing

<http://www.peelregion.ca/news/archiveitem.asp?year=2017&month=7&day=17&file=2017717.xml>.

There are no reported instances of human infection associated with this case and the risk to the general public is low. More information about psittacosis can be found at the CDC's website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/pneumonia/atypical/psittacosis.html>.

Chlamydophila psittaci is a gram negative obligate intracellular bacterium which typically infects psittacine birds (those in the parrot family). Infected birds shed large numbers of the bacteria in feces and respiratory secretions. Intermittent shedding is common and will increase with stress from handling, mixing, changes in diet or concurrent disease. Asymptomatic birds may appear clinically normal but shed large numbers of bacteria and serve as a reservoir of infection. Clinical signs of avian chlamydiosis are non-specific and include anorexia, lethargy, weight loss, conjunctivitis, nasal discharge and occasionally diarrhea. It is spread by direct contact and environmental contamination.

Veterinarians should contact an animal health laboratory for guidance on appropriate diagnostic testing and sample submission.

Avian chlamydiosis is managed using a combination of antimicrobial therapy, thorough cleaning and disinfection procedures and appropriate flock biosecurity procedures.

The resources listed below contain more information pertaining to the disease and infection control measures.

RESOURCES

National Association of State Public Veterinarians

<http://www.nasphv.org/documentsCompendiaPsittacosis.html>

Iowa State University – Center for Food Security and Public Health

<http://www.cfsph.iastate.edu/Factsheets/pdfs/psittacosis.pdf>

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