Treatment

"There is no treatment for avian metapneumovirus. However, treatment may be important in controlling secondary bacterial infections. The earlier any secondary diseases are identified and treated, the better the prognosis. Contact your veterinarian as soon as any infection is suspected." **(Penn State Extension, 2024)**


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Poultry News

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Avian Metapneumovirus

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What is it?

“Avian metapneumovirus (AMPV) is a viral upper respiratory disease of poultry including turkeys, broilers, layers, and breeders. AMPV may also affect other poultry and avian species such as pheasants, Muscovy ducks, pigeons, and various wild birds.” **(Penn State Extension, 2024)**

What are the signs & symptoms?

“Birds of any age can be infected by avian metapneumovirus, although the disease is typically more severe in younger birds. AMPV primarily affects the upper respiratory tract, causing inflammation of the nares (nostrils), sinuses, and trachea. Clinical signs may include coughing, mucus or discharge from the nares, swollen heads, and general signs of an unthrifty bird. At later stages, disease may progress to include torticollis (twisted neck or stargazing) or other neurological signs due to involvement of the inner ear. In severe cases, vent prolapse may occur due to straining from coughing.” **(Penn State Extension, 2024)**

How is it spread?

“Infected animals develop local and systemic immunity. However, maternal derived antibodies do not correlate with protection. In intensive flocks, infection spreads rapidly between birds.” **(Journal of Applied Poultry Research, 2021)** Avian metapneumovirus spreads readily through direct contact of respiratory secretions. The virus can survive in rodents for several days, and rodent, human, insect, or inanimate fomites can readily spread infective secretions from one house to another. Although transmission via aerosolization cannot be discounted, it is much less likely to occur than direct contact. There are no published records of direct vertical transmission (spread from breeder hen to chick/poult). **(Penn State Extension, 2024)**

Prevention & Biosecurity

Wild birds are thought to be reservoirs for avian metapneumovirus. However, if AMPV becomes present on a farm, the virus may persist in a poultry house for a long time under ideal conditions. The current best practices to prevent avian metapneumovirus infection and spread include cleaning, disinfection, adequate downtime between flocks, appropriate stocking densities, and strict biosecurity measures.” **(Penn State Extension, 2024)** “Application of rigorous biosecurity and vaccination programs are crucial and effective for the control of turkey rhinotracheitis. Different types of vaccines are used, with satisfactory protection offered by live attenuated and inactivated vaccines. In addition, new vaccines are being developed and tested which seem to give convincing results.” **(Journal of Applied Poultry Research, 2021)**