

Avian Flu H5N1

All viruses in the influenza family are very easy to kill with any respectable disinfectant, and H5N1 is the same. But there are two points to note.

1. H5N1 has never passed to humans in significant numbers. It has only killed just over 100 people around the world in several years whereas thousands of people die with the 'normal' winter influenza in just Britain every year. Therefore H5N1 is simply not a problem for people so we have decided to not spend the small fortune required to prove it is like all other 'flu viruses and therefore very susceptible to our technology.

2. When it changes into a human virus and causes a pandemic outbreak, or another 'flu virus sneaks in and achieves the same, that pandemic virus will also be very susceptible to disinfectants because it will still be an influenza virus. Yet despite there being numerous perfectly effective disinfectants available, hundreds of thousands, and possibly many millions, of people will die. The reason will be multi-factorial but four points are worth noting:

i. During any outbreak of viral respiratory disease around half of the people who become infected become infected because they touched their mouth or eyes with fingers contaminated with the virus. The other half are the ones who breathed in the virus, but the key point is that dirty fingertips are just as dangerous as breathing it in. During the pandemic outbreak most people will reach for the toughest disinfectants including alcohol based hand rubs. But for decades it has been known that even though people carry alcohol rubs they rarely use them because the alcohol stings. Therefore those who rely on alcohol hand rubs are likely to be greatly increasing their chances of infecting themselves, despite having purchased and carried on their person a technically adequate disinfectant. In complete contrast, if those people were carrying a hand rub that positively made their hands feel good they will use it, making NewGenn products far more useful in real life-and-death situations.

ii. The virus will settle onto all sorts of surfaces and equipment. During pandemics governments typically reach for bleach or other equally corrosive disinfectants because they want the public to see them selecting the really aggressive tough products. The aggressive nature of those products actually leads to poor usage so even though they are powerful if they contact the virus, all too often they are not used and the virus survives.

iii. The aggressive oxidising chemicals like bleach are very easily inactivated by protein. The 'flu virus is shed in mucous which contains protein, so the worst technology to offer people is something that is inactivated by what the virus will be coated in. NewGenn's products all have an inbuilt ability to penetrate protein and dissolve viruses, again making them the better choice on technical grounds.

iv. The virus will also settle onto people and very few people will douse themselves in bleach or alcohol. Therefore this aspect of the threat often goes unchallenged even though the virus is right there on the very people. In this situation only a pleasant product like NewGenn's Personal Care Foam is likely to be used all over the body and used every day throughout the outbreak.

The overall picture therefore rests on the virus being very easy to kill, but very few people will actually kill it. That is a psychological phenomenon which is best addressed with soft friendly products they will use frequently and almost subconsciously, as typified by NewGenn. In complete contrast, most members of the public, and most governments, will reach for the very aggressive products that have always failed in the past. Times have moved on since the last big 'flu pandemics and lessons were learned from the SARS scare. That has all been translated into the NewGenn products to ensure people are better protected in the future.

Dr Harley Farmer
Technical Director
NewGenn Research Limited