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Lunar New Year 2025: Travel advice

Celebrating the Lunar New Year abroad? Lunar New Year is a public holiday, with festivities taking place over several days in many countries worldwide; planning ahead helps you have a safe and enjoyable trip

The Lunar New Year, also known as Chinese New Year, the Spring Festival, Tet and Seollal, is celebrated in different ways in many countries and cultures throughout Asia and worldwide.

Celebrations officially start on 29 January 2025, with the festival likely to attract big crowds and international visitors. When many people gather in one place, infectious diseases like measles, colds, respiratory infections, influenza (flu) and pneumonia can spread more easily and there is a higher chance of accidents or injuries [1].

The World Health Organization (WHO) is reporting an increase in respiratory infections worldwide, including in Asia and the Far East this winter season. However, this is likely to be driven by a seasonal upsurge in known respiratory pathogens, consistent with what is usually reported every year [2].

[Avian influenza](#) (bird flu) is a virus in birds that can spread from infected birds to other animals and humans. Avian flu in humans is rare, but is reported worldwide, including in the Americas, China and Southeast Asia [3-5] mainly in people with close contact with birds or other infected animals.

Reduce your risk of avian influenza by avoiding all contact with animals. This includes wild animals/birds (dead or alive), cattle and domestic animals/birds and 'wet markets' in Asia and the Far East.

See [Avian influenza in China - Prevention advice for travellers](#) for more information.

Advice for travellers

See also our [General advice for travellers](#) and [Personal safety factsheet](#) for information on protecting yourself from travel-related health hazards.

Before you travel

Check the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office [Foreign travel advice](#) for the country you are visiting. This advice includes safety and security, entry requirements and travel warnings for your destination.

Remember to get appropriate [travel insurance](#) and check that your policy covers all your travel plans.

Check health advice for your destination in our [Country Information pages](#).

Arrange an appointment with your GP, practice nurse, pharmacist or travel clinic to make sure you are in-date for all recommended travel and [routine UK vaccines](#), including [COVID-19](#) and [flu](#). This is very important if you have any pre-existing health issues or are pregnant.

Do not travel if you are unwell [2].

While you are away

Protect yourself against respiratory infections by:

- [Washing your hands often](#) with soap and running water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser containing at least 60% alcohol if soap and water not available. This is particularly important after taking public transport or being in public spaces.
- Avoiding close contact with anyone who is unwell.
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, dispose of tissues appropriately (put all used tissues into a waste bin) and wash hands [6].
- Avoiding contact with birds and animals, including domestic animals and cattle (alive or dead).

Follow [good food and water hygiene](#) rules and do not eat, drink or handle undercooked or raw poultry, egg, duck dishes or unpasteurised/raw milk and dairy products [3].

If you are visiting a country with a risk of insect spread illnesses reduce your risk by wearing long sleeves/trousers, applying insect repellent regularly and follow [insect and tick bite avoidance advice](#). 50% DEET (N, N-diethyl-m-toluamide) based insect repellents are the most effective repellents currently available and can be used in pregnancy, breastfeeding and for children from two months of age.

When you return

Get urgent medical attention if you are unwell on your return and share your travel history with your health professional [2]. If you develop fever and a cough within 14 days of travel, you should seek medical advice by calling your GP or [NHS 111](#).

See [Avian flu in China: Advice for returning travellers](#) for further advice about avian flu symptoms.

Advice for health professionals

Health professionals advising UK residents planning to travel abroad to celebrate Lunar New Year can check our [Country Information pages](#) for destination-specific health advice and vaccine recommendations. Health professionals should contact their local microbiology, virology or infectious diseases consultant for advice about returning travellers with fever/acute illness. Further advice is available for health professionals from the [Imported Fever Service](#).

Advice for health professionals on investigating and public health management of suspected Avian influenza is available from UKHSA: [Avian influenza: recognising risk exposures among symptomatic persons with recent international travel](#) and [Avian influenza: guidance for managing human cases](#).

Resources

- [European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control: Avian influenza](#)
- [Global risk of measles: travel reminder](#)
- [World Health Organization: Influenza \(avian and other zoonotic\) factsheet](#)
- [World Health Organization: Influenza updates](#)
- [UK Health Security Agency: What is bird flu and how are we protecting people against it in the UK?](#)

- [UK Health Security Agency: MMR for all](#)
- [UK Health Security Agency: Avian influenza: guidance, data and analysis](#)
- [UK Health Security Agency: Respiratory viruses](#)

References

1. [Government of Canada. Lunar New Year 2025. 9 December 2024. \[Accessed 6 January 2025\]](#)
2. [World Health Organization. Global trends in infectious respiratory diseases WHO Member State Briefing. 19 December 2024. \[Accessed 6 January 2025\]](#)
3. [World Health Organization. Updated joint FAO/WHO/WOAH public health assessment of recent influenza A\(H5\) virus events in animals and people. 20 December 2024. \[Accessed 6 January 2025\]](#)
4. [Pan American Health Organization. PAHO highlights increase in dengue, Oropouche, and avian influenza cases in the Americas, and advises control measures. 10 December 2024. \[Accessed 6 January 2025\]](#)
5. [US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2020-2024 Highlights in the History of Avian Influenza \(Bird Flu\) Timeline. 30 April 2024. \[Accessed 6 January 2025\]](#)
6. [UK Health Security Agency. Preventing and controlling infections. Last updated 12 September 2024. \[Accessed 6 January 2025\]](#)