First Global Inventory of Avian Influenza Strains

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To better secure human health, a group of international scientists has finished the first global inventory of avian influenza strains, according to a statement by the Wildlife Conservation Society, which led the inventory. The group reviewed genetic data and more than 50 published studies from around the world.

The researchers found more than 116 avian flu strains in wild birds, according to research published in the journal PLOS ONE from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) PREDICT program, which is a global early warning system for emerging infectious diseases.

The wild bird strains are roughly twice the number found in domestic birds and more than 10 times the number found in humans. The inventory will allow scientists to better understand what drives viral diversity and the emergence of rare viral strains that can infect people.

Scientists are increasingly concerned by the harm to humans of avian flu outbreaks. In 2013, virologists were surprised when a deadly outbreak in China was caused by avian flu strain H7N9, which had never before caused human disease. Currently, more than 300 people have been infected with a 33 percent mortality rate.

To read the statement, click here.

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http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/avian-flu-25251-3961