

## WHAT IS THE MOST INFECTIOUS POULTRY (VIRUS) DISEASE?

### ***INFECTIOUS BRONCHITIS AT IT'S WORSE***

**Swelling  
in facial area  
with watery  
discharge  
from eyes**



Infectious bronchitis is an extremely contagious respiratory disease of chickens characterized by coughing, sneezing watery discharge from eyes & nose, misshaped & soft shell eggs and rales (rattling). It is caused by a virus that affects chickens only.

Symptoms are difficult breathing, gasping, sneezing and rales. Some birds may have a slight watery nasal discharge.

The disease never causes nervous symptoms. It prevails for ten to fourteen days in a flock and symptoms lasting longer than this are from some other cause.

Infectious bronchitis is considered the most contagious of poultry diseases. When it occurs, all susceptible birds on the premises become infected, regardless of sanitary or quarantine precautions.

The disease can spread through the air and can "jump" considerable distances during an active outbreak. It can also be spread by mechanical means such as on clothing, poultry crates and equipment.

The disease is not egg transmitted and the virus will survive for probably no more than one week in the house when poultry are not present.

It is easily destroyed by heat and ordinary disinfectants.

*The infection is confined to the respiratory system.*

In chickens under three weeks of age, mortality may be as high as thirty or forty percent. The disease does not cause a significant mortality in birds over five weeks of age.

Feed consumption decreases sharply and growth is retarded.

When infectious bronchitis occurs in a laying flock, production usually drops to near zero with a few days. Four weeks or more may be required before the flock returns to production. During an outbreak, small, soft-shelled, irregular-shaped eggs are produced.

Infectious bronchitis is difficult to differentiate from many of the other respiratory diseases. For this reason, a definite diagnosis usually requires a laboratory analysis, if you don't have a lab available in your area, call your vet for help.

*Infectious bronchitis is highly contagious and does not always respect sanitary barriers.* All vaccines contain live virus and those that give the best protection are also capable of producing symptoms and reducing egg production.

There is no treatment for this disease. In young chickens it is helpful to increase the brooder temperature and provide as nearly ideal environmental conditions as possible.