
Pullorum Disease Fact Sheet

Pullorum Disease (PD) is a severe disease of young chicks that is caused by a bacteria called *Salmonella pullorum*

PD is very rare in the United States

PD has been eradicated from commercial poultry production for nearly 50 years. But, the disease is still occasionally found in smaller producer flocks. The last reported outbreak of PD in the U.S. occurred in a small flock in 2004.

Pullorum Disease also affects turkeys and game birds. Ducks, geese, doves, and pigeons appear to be more resistant.

Symptoms of Pullorum Disease in chicks include:

- ✕ Chalky-white diarrhea
- ✕ Pasted vent
- ✕ Huddling together
- ✕ Lameness
- ✕ Difficulty breathing

PD was commonly referred to as 'Bacillary White Diarrhea', and/or 'Chick Septicemia' and has a **death rate of up to 100% of the flock**. Chicks that survive carry the disease and can pass the bacteria to their young through infected eggs. Chicks that hatch from infected eggs become sick 7-10 days later. Sick chicks can then easily spread the bacteria to other young chicks by contaminating the environment with pullorum bacteria in their feces.

Adult 'carrier' birds may not show any signs of disease. Some birds may show mild signs of infection, including:

- ✕ Drop in egg production
- ✕ Low hatchability
- ✕ Sometimes have diarrhea

The National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) was introduced in the U.S. in 1935 to eliminate PD. The basic standards of the NPIP Control Program include:

1. PD must be reported to the state department of agriculture (WSDA)
2. All reports of PD must be investigated by an authorized state or federal official
3. Flocks involved in a disease outbreak must be placed under quarantine and infected flocks marketed under supervision.
4. Poultry and hatching eggs that are shipped into the state must be from flocks that have been tested and are free of the disease.
5. State regulations require poultry going to exhibition to be free from PD.