



## NEWS RELEASE

### ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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## ADPH issues precautionary notice to those who have visited Birmingham Zoo's Lorikeet Aviary in past 30 days

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Alabama Department of Public Health is issuing a precautionary notice to any individuals who have visited the Birmingham Zoo's Lorikeet Aviary in the past 30 days. The zoo performed recent laboratory tests that confirmed several of the birds in the aviary were positive for a bacterial disease known as psittacosis. The bacterium, *Chlamydia psittaci*, is an animal disease which can sometimes be transmitted to humans.

Although human psittacosis is not common, infection is most likely to occur when there is direct contact with infected birds or bird secretions. People with prolonged contact with the birds, such as the aviary workers and caretakers, immune compromised or pregnant persons would be considered the most at risk. The usual symptoms of psittacosis in humans include fever, chills, headache, muscle aches, and a dry cough that can develop into pneumonia. These symptoms and other less common, more severe symptoms usually occur 3-14 days following exposure, but longer incubation periods do occur.

The aviary is now closed and will remain closed until the infection is controlled by treating the sick birds, appropriate disinfection, and additional laboratory testing.

Persons who are experiencing or begin to experience any of the listed symptoms since visiting the zoo within the past 30 days should seek medical attention. People seeking medical attention should inform their medical provider of their bird exposure. For people showing no symptoms, no medical treatment is necessary.

For more information on psittacosis or additional consultation about exposure contact the ADPH Division of Epidemiology, 1-800-338-8374, or the Jefferson County Department of Health at (205) 933-9110.