

Marek's Disease

Causal agent: Herpesvirus

Incubation time: 3-6 weeks

Infection route:

- Vulnerable birds inhale contaminated feather dander through the eyes, mouth, and nose.
- Infected birds may also shed virus through excretions and secretions.
- Carrier birds can sporadically shed the virus throughout their lives.



Partial paralysis in affected bird.



Left: normal chicken eye. Right: eye of a chicken infected with Marek's disease

Clinical signs:

(Clinical signs appear after 3 weeks of age and peak between 2 and 7 months.)

- Depression
- Loss of muscle mass
- Partial paralysis
- Crop dilation
- Blindness

Prevention and control:

Immunization at time of hatch (life-long protection)

Treatment: No treatment.

Fowl Pox

Causal agent: Poxvirus

Incubation time: 4-10 days

Infection route:

- The virus enters the bird through breaks in the skin or by inhalation of contaminated feather dander or scabs.
- Fowl pox may also be transmitted from bird to bird or through artificial insemination in turkeys.
- Mechanical transmission by mosquitoes.



Scab-like lesion on infected laying hen

Clinical signs:

(Signs vary based on pox form.)

Cutaneous form: (Dry Pox)

- Mild reduction in weight
- Loss in egg production
- Loss of flock vigor
- Low mortality (if disease is uncomplicated)

Diphtheric form: (Wet Pox)

- Difficulty breathing
- Loss of appetite
- Nasal or ocular discharge
- Low to moderate mortality (due to suffocation or starvation and dehydration)

Prevention and control:

- Vaccination (wing web)
- Control cannibalism with proper beak trimming and reduced light intensity.

Treatment: No treatment.