

# Possible seasonal shot seen for bird flu

4 May 2006

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A seasonal flu shot against a possible bird flu pandemic is reported to be under consideration by U.S. public health officials at a Singapore conference.

Using an old tool for a new purpose, the idea, still in the talking stage, would be to add to existing flu vaccine the strain of avian influenza most likely to cause a worldwide outbreak among humans, the Wall Street Journal said Thursday.

Producing such a vaccine would not be an easy matter. One major drawback is there is no stand-alone bird flu vaccine approved for use, making it more difficult to find a strain that would effectively combine with others.

Officials say they are considering the possibility of giving millions of Americans a touch of exposure over the years to build up a degree of immunity rather than wait for a pandemic strain and rushing to manufacture a vaccine.

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