

Why make bird flu more virulent? An explainer

A few years ago, a researcher took the deadly bird flu, turned it into a highly contagious deadly bird flu, and then tried to publish how he did it. The ensuing controversy delayed the publication of his paper for six months.

However, H5N1 doesn't spread from person to person through the air. You can't catch it from a cough or sneeze, like seasonal flu. That's one of the main reasons that transmission between humans is very rare. H5N1 mutates quickly, though, so experts are concerned that it could become more contagious — and then a pandemic.

This week, his group is back with a perfected recipe: the minimum number of mutations needed to make bird flu spread between mammals easily. Wondering why someone would do such a crazy thing? Do read on.

Read the full, original story here: [Here's why scientists just published the recipe for superflu](#)