

CROSSROADS

For Members of the National Armed Forces Association

Today let us, as Americans, honor the American fighting man. For it is he - the soldier, the Airman, the Marine - who has fought to preserve freedom. It is his valor that has given renewed hope to the free world that by working together in discipline and faith our ideals of freedom will always prevail.

-Admiral Forrest P. Sherman



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A More Convenient Way to Get Screened for Colon Cancer

(BPT) - Guardant Health

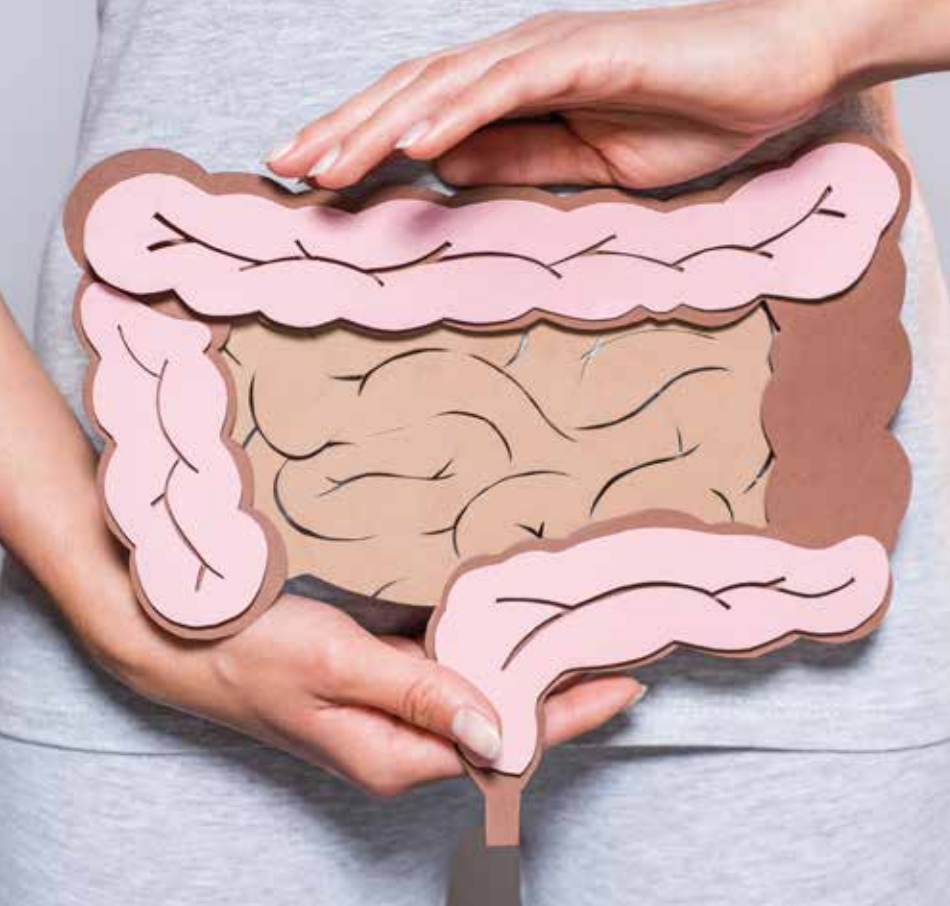
Did you know colorectal cancer (CRC) is one of the most treatable forms of cancer when it's caught in its early stages, yet one in three American adults are not up to date with recommended screening? This means more than 50 million Americans age 45 and older may miss the chance to catch CRC early, when survival rates are as high as 91%. Instead, they may not know they have CRC until it's in late stages, when the chance of survival can plummet to 16%.

Studies show that people at average risk for colon cancer often avoid screening because they think traditional screening options, such as colonoscopies and stool-based tests, are unpleasant or inconvenient. But alternative

options, like a simple blood test, may help more people get screened.

Like many Americans, Elissa Brown, a 61-year-old college counseling advisor, was facing this problem. After a loved one was diagnosed with colon cancer, Brown learned firsthand how critical it is to stay up to date with screenings but still had concerns about traditional options being inconvenient or unpleasant.

"I knew how important it is to get checked for colon cancer, but seeing the impact of the disease reinforced how critical screening truly is for everyone," said Brown. "That's why I prioritized talking to my doctor about screening and learning about the different options available."



At her next OB-GYN appointment, Brown asked about CRC screening. While she had used a stool-based test previously, this visit taught her about an alternate approach - Shield, a new blood test that offered a more pleasant screening option for people age 45 and older and at average risk for colon cancer. The test only required a simple blood draw during a routine doctor visit.

Brown decided Shield was the best option for her. She was also confident that she was using a screening method recommended by her OB-GYN's practice and backed by study results published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

After a quick blood draw, Brown received her results about two weeks later, giving her the peace of mind of knowing she not only had a negative result but was also up to date with her screening for colon cancer.

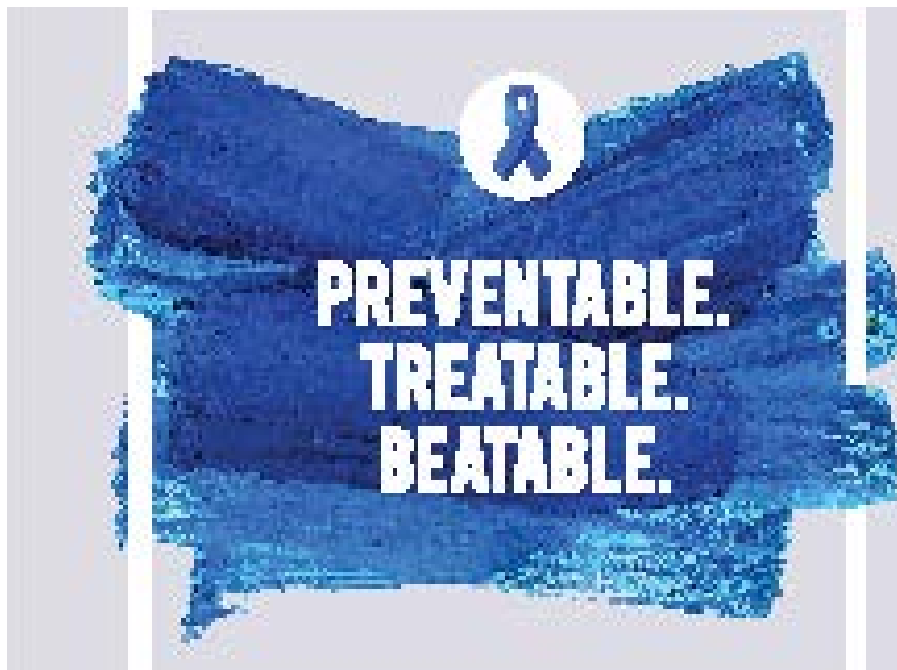
"I was nervous about getting screened for colon cancer, but Shield helped eliminate those fears," she said. "The best part is the test didn't require any preparation or downtime - just a quick blood draw - which is important to me because my life is very busy."

The Shield test is covered by Medicare, so those with Medicare Part B will have no out-of-pocket cost; if you have a Medicare Advantage plan, you may have a copay. Once Shield is included in clinical screening guidelines, many commercial insurance providers are expected to cover it as well.

"I'm so glad I didn't let the stress of a colonoscopy or the 'ick' factor of stool tests stop me from taking care of my health," said Brown. "Early detection can save your life and now the Shield blood test makes screening so easy. It just makes sense to get it done and know your status."

Adults 45 and older who are due for colon cancer screening can talk to their doctor about whether Shield is the right option for them. To learn more about Shield, visit [ShieldCancerScreen.com](https://www.shieldcancerscreen.com).

Shield is indicated for colorectal cancer screening in individuals at average risk for the disease, age 45 years or older. Patients with a positive result should be followed by colonoscopy. Shield is not a replacement for diagnostic colonoscopy or for surveillance colonoscopy in high-risk individuals. This test is performed at Guardant Health, Inc





Pet insurance is a health insurance plan that covers the illnesses and injuries of your pet. This includes veterinarians, ERs, and specialists.

Association members enjoy 5% off pet insurance plans

Pet Health Insurance: **Less Worry, More Peace of Mind**

A health insurance plan for your pet frees you from financial stress when choosing the best available veterinary care for your furry friend. With Figo:

- Insurance plans cover unexpected illnesses and injuries of your dog or cat.
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- We may reimburse up to 100% of your actual vet bill with options for unlimited annual benefits.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS

The Annual Meeting of the Members of The National Armed Forces Association will be held at 12444 Powerscourt Drive, Suite 500A, St. Louis, Missouri, on Wednesday, June 11, 2025 at 11:15 a.m. (CST) for election of Directors and for the transaction of such other business as may properly come before the meeting and any adjournment thereof.

The above notice is given pursuant to the By-Laws of the Association.

PROXY

National Armed Forces Association June 11, 2025 Annual Meeting of Members THIS PROXY IS SOLICITED ON BEHALF OF THE NATIONAL ARMED FORCES ASSOCIATION

The undersigned member of The National Armed Forces Association does hereby constitute and appoint the President of the National Armed Forces Association, the true and lawful attorney(s) of the undersigned with full power of substitution, to appear and act as the proxy or proxies of the undersigned at the Annual Meeting of the Members of the National Armed Forces Association and at any and all adjournments thereof, and to vote for and in the name, place and stead of the undersigned, as fully as the undersigned might or could do if personally present, as set forth below:

1. FOR [], or to [] WITHHOLD AUTHORITY to vote for, the following nominees for Board of Directors:
John Schwaig, Jeff Crippin, and Matt Merrifield
2. In their discretion, the proxies are authorized to vote upon such other business as may properly come before the Meeting.

This proxy, when properly executed, will be voted in the manner directed by the undersigned member. If no direction is made, this proxy will be voted for the election of directors and officers.

DATED: _____, 2025

Signature _____

Name (please print) _____

Please date and sign and return promptly to 12444 Powerscourt Drive, Suite 500A, St. Louis, Missouri 63131 whether or not you expect to attend this meeting. The Proxy is revocable and will not affect your right to vote in person in the event that you attend the meeting.

St. Louis, Missouri
May 12, 2025



What You Need to Know About Avian Influenza

(BPT) - America's poultry is at an unprecedented risk from avian influenza, commonly known as bird flu. Specifically, highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) poses the highest risk, which is a strain of the virus that is extremely contagious and often deadly to domestic poultry. HPAI has been detected in all 50 states, affecting over 136 million birds and a range of species, including chickens, turkeys and geese. As the avian influenza outbreak continues, consumers feel the pinch of egg prices, poultry farmers' livelihoods are impacted, and bird owners are on heightened alert.

Wild birds are the number one source of disease spread by carrying the infection in their droppings and contaminating water sources, especially during the migratory seasons. People can even unknowingly spread avian flu through their work boots and

clothes, as well as on farm equipment and vehicles that have not been properly disinfected.

To compound the concern, it was recently discovered that not just birds are susceptible to avian influenza. The virus can jump to different animal species and then reinfect otherwise healthy birds. Because HPAI-exposed pests and pets - like mice, cats, and dogs - and even other farm animals may not show signs of illness, the rapid spread of disease is hard to contain without proper safety measures in place.

USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services (APHIS) has been working hard to contain HPAI and the U.S. has one of the strongest avian influenza surveillance programs in the world. However, as the disease spreads to poultry in new ways, it makes eradication even more difficult.



The good news is there are steps that all farmers and bird enthusiasts can take to help protect our poultry. In fact, these safety precautions, or biosecurity measures, can be inexpensive and relatively easy to implement.

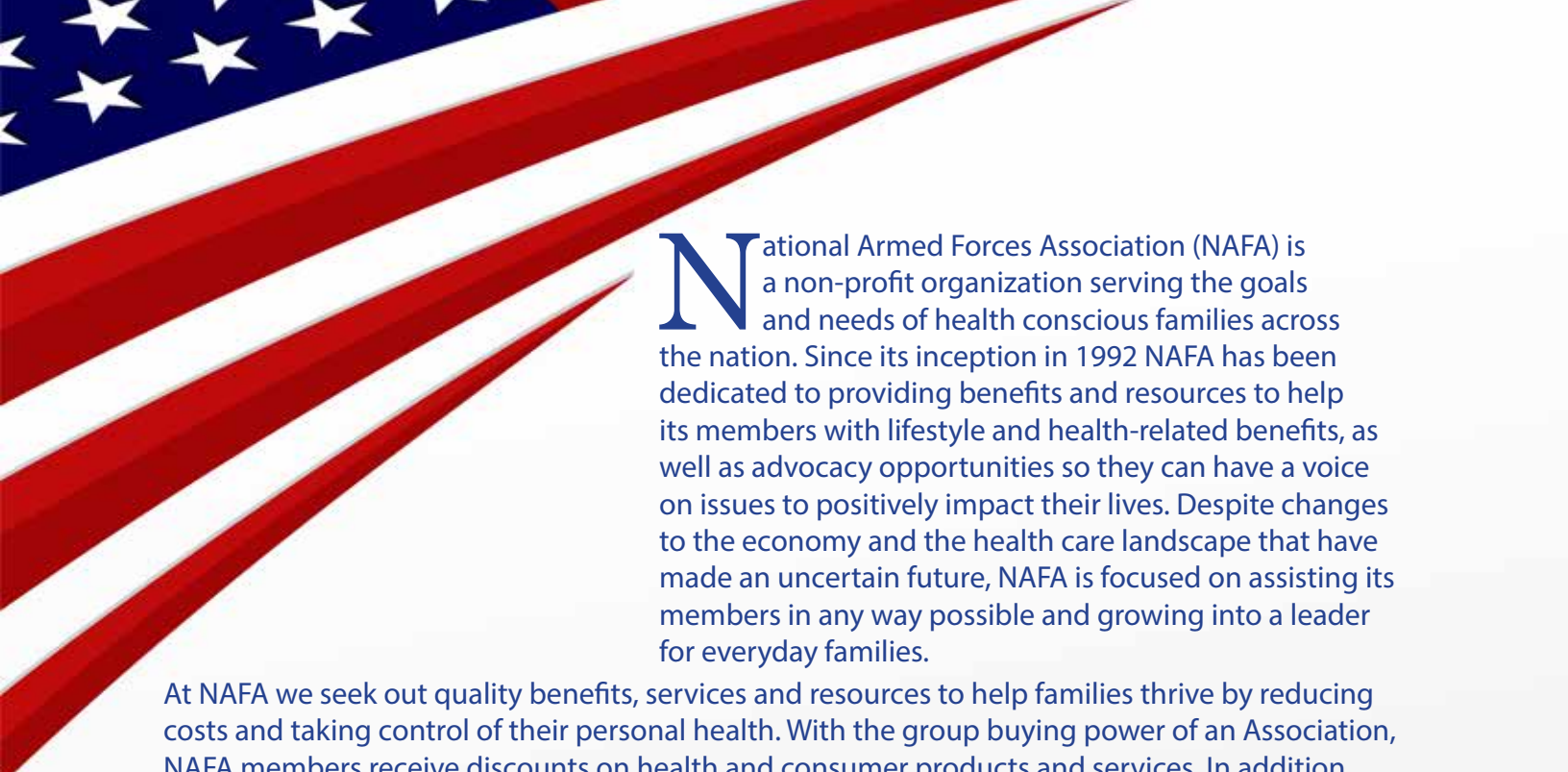
From backyards to barnyards, here are four ways we can all help protect birds:

- **Clean Up:** Disinfect and sanitize farm equipment, footwear, and clothing used in poultry areas every day or after use. Ensure feed is stored properly to prevent contamination from wild birds and rodents. Make sure animals have clean water and bedding.
- **Suit Up:** Use dedicated boots for the farm and a footbath to disinfect footwear daily. Wear gloves in the poultry areas. Give visitors disposable shoe covers, minimize farm visitors, and limit farm traffic.

- **Divide Up:** Separate your farm species, keep livestock, pets, and wild birds away from poultry. Use covered enclosures and netting to avoid contact between domestic poultry and wild birds. And don't let birds roam in pens and barns.
- **Brush Up:** Learn the signs of avian influenza such as trouble breathing, lack of appetite, nasal discharge, decreased egg production, and sudden or unexplained death. Monitor bird health closely, isolate sick birds, and report any signs of illness to your veterinarians and/or State or Federal animal health official.

We can all be flu fighters when we know what to do about avian influenza. To learn more and get free biosecurity resources, checklists, and tools to keep birds safe from disease, go to USDA APHIS' Defend the Flock website: <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/avian/defend-the-flock>.





National Armed Forces Association (NAFA) is a non-profit organization serving the goals and needs of health conscious families across the nation. Since its inception in 1992 NAFA has been dedicated to providing benefits and resources to help its members with lifestyle and health-related benefits, as well as advocacy opportunities so they can have a voice on issues to positively impact their lives. Despite changes to the economy and the health care landscape that have made an uncertain future, NAFA is focused on assisting its members in any way possible and growing into a leader for everyday families.

At NAFA we seek out quality benefits, services and resources to help families thrive by reducing costs and taking control of their personal health. With the group buying power of an Association, NAFA members receive discounts on health and consumer products and services. In addition, we strive to provide our members with valuable information relevant to your life. NAFA shares information on wellness, lifestyle, nutrition, and more through our newsletters, website and emails.

Our commitment to membership defines us. We will continue seeking out new and improved benefits so that we may remain a valued resource and valued partner to the consumer and for small businesses throughout the nation.

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National Armed Forces Association

For information regarding your membership
and association services, call or write:

**Membership Services Office
National Armed Forces Association
12444 Powerscourt Drive
Suite 500A
St. Louis, MO 63131**

1-800-992-8044 or (636) 530-7200

Articles in this newsletter are meant to be informative, enlightening, and helpful to you. While all information contained herein is meant to be completely factual, it is always subject to change. Articles are not intended to provide medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Consult your doctor before starting any exercise program.