



Staying Healthy Around Pets



Some tips from the CDC



- Always wash your hands—and your child's—after handling or being around animals or their waste, food, or supplies (like cages, water bowls, toys, beds, leashes, etc.). This is particularly important before handling baby bottles and pacifiers or holding infants.



- Choose appropriate pets for your household. Do some research before getting a new pet.
 - Rodents, reptiles, amphibians, and poultry are not recommended if you live with children under 5 years of age, adults over 65 years of age, or anyone who is immunocompromised.
 - Because rodents, reptiles, amphibians, and poultry are more likely than other animals to spread germs, don't kiss, snuggle, or hold these animals close to your face.



- Always supervise children around pets. Discourage them from kissing their pets, holding pets close to their faces, or allowing pets to lick their face or mouth.



- Keep pets and their supplies out of the kitchen or other areas where you prepare, serve, or eat food.



- Clean up after animals properly. For example, cat litter should be scooped daily (especially if anyone in the home is pregnant) and changed at least twice weekly. Pregnant women should not clean cat litter. Remove dog waste from private and public spaces. Clean cages, habitats, and supplies outside the home when possible to avoid contaminating surfaces. If that is not possible, then clean them in a laundry sink or bathtub and then disinfect that area immediately afterwards.



- Avoid rough play with animals to minimize chances for bites or scratches. Teach children to play with animals appropriately. Do not let small children near pets that are eating, to reduce the risk for injury.



- Clean bites and scratches immediately with soap and water, and seek medical care if the wound is serious or becomes red, painful, warm, or swollen; the animal appears sick; or if you don't know the vaccination status of the animal.



- Enjoy wildlife, but only from a safe distance to avoid illness and injury.