

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Pet-Script

Pets provide many health benefits for people. However, some pets can transmit diseases to people. These diseases are called zoonoses (zoo-oh-noh-sees). This Pet-Script has been given to you to help you enjoy your pets while keeping you healthy.

To best protect yourself from getting sick from many animal diseases, wash your hands with running water and soap after contact with animals and their feces (stool). Avoid rough play with cats and dogs to prevent scratches and bites. Some people are more likely than others to get diseases from animals and need to be extra cautious. A person's age and health status may affect his or her immune system, increasing the chances of getting sick. These people include:

- Infants and children less than 5 years old.
- Elderly.
- Pregnant women.
- People undergoing treatments for cancer.
- People who have received organ transplants.
- People with HIV/AIDS.

Different types of animals can carry different diseases. Some animals may be more likely than others to carry diseases that make people sick. If you fit into one of the groups of people outlined above, you should avoid contact with the following:

- Reptiles (turtles, lizards, and snakes).
- Baby chicks and ducklings.
- Puppies and kittens less than 6 months old.
- Pets with diarrhea.

Additionally, if you are at higher risk of diseases from animals, you should be extra cautious around farm animals, including those at petting zoos and petting farms.

- To prevent illness due to animal contact, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends the following for all people, but especially for those at greatest risk of getting sick from pets:
- Always wash your hands thoroughly with soap and running water after contact with animals and their feces.
- Avoid rough play with cats and dogs to prevent scratches and bites.
- If you are at higher risk of getting sick from animals, you should avoid contact with reptiles, baby chicks, ducklings, puppies and kittens. You should also be extra cautious around young calves and other animals.

Health Professional Signature Date

