

VISITING ANIMALS IN PUBLIC SETTINGS: FAIRS, PETTING ZOOS, FARMS



Although visiting animals in public places can be a fun experience, diseases such as E.coli, Rabies, Salmonella and others can spread from animals to people if some precautions are not followed.

HOW DISEASES SPREAD FROM ANIMALS TO PEOPLE

Animals carry disease-causing microorganisms and can pass them to people through their feces. Animals carrying disease often have no signs of being sick and can continue to release or shed microorganisms into the environment.

DISEASE OUTBREAKS IN PUBLIC PLACES HAVE BEEN LINKED TO THE FOLLOWING ANIMALS:

- Cows/Calves
- Goats
- Sheep
- Amphibians (frogs and toads)
- Pigs
- Rodents
- Live poultry
- Reptiles (turtles, lizards and snakes)

Certain diseases may be more common in young animals as they tend to shed more disease-causing microorganisms than adult animals.

Anyone experiencing symptoms of disease within a month after visiting animals in a public place should seek medical attention.

AVOID TOUCHING OR FEEDING ANIMALS IF YOU ARE PART OF A HIGH RISK GROUP:

- Persons with weakened immune systems such as the elderly and pregnant people
- Infants under one year old
- Children under five should not come in contact with certain animals or their immediate environment as they shed more disease-causing agents. These animals include reptiles, amphibians, birds and young ruminants (under six months old)

Public Health

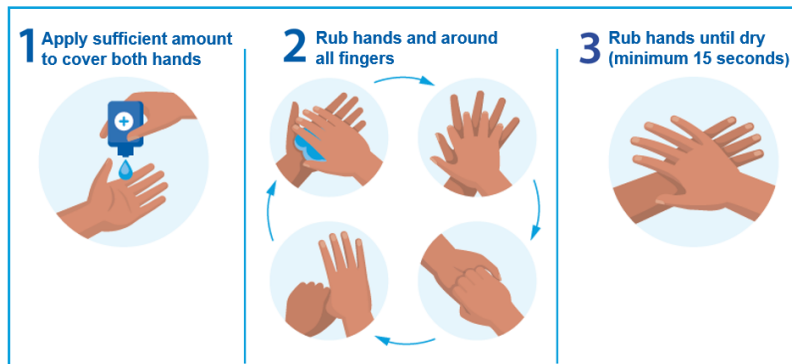
1-800-361-5653
TTY 1-866-512-6228
york.ca/InfectionPrevention



INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL – HAND HYGIENE

Improper hand hygiene is one of the main causes of disease transmission from animals to humans in public places. Correct hand hygiene is the single most effective way to reduce the spread of disease.

If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer that contains 70-90% alcohol with a Natural Product Number (NPN). Sanitizers do not kill ALL types of disease-causing agents — always wash hands with soap and water as soon as possible after being in animal areas. If hands are soiled, wipe them with a towelette before using hand sanitizer.



Practice good hand hygiene:

- After touching or feeding an animal
- After touching an animal's environment (barriers, pens)
- Immediately upon leaving animal areas
- Before eating or drinking
- After removing soiled boots, shoes or clothing
- After using the toilet

GENERAL TIPS

- Do not take strollers, food, drinks, toys, pacifiers, spill-proof cups (sippy cups) and baby bottles into animal areas
- Discourage kissing the animals or wiping hands on clothing
- Discourage hand-to-mouth activities while in animal areas (thumb sucking, use of pacifiers, mouthed toys, water bottles, smoking, eating, drinking)
- Ensure there are an appropriate number of adult supervisors to keep a close eye on children
- Eat before your visit

ANIMAL BITES OR SCRATCHES

Anyone who has been injured (biting or scratching that breaks a person's skin) by an animal should seek medical attention. The incident should be reported to the petting zoo operator and to York Region Public Health at 1-800-361-5653.