

Tips on Preventing Parasitic Infections from Pets

Pets, especially dogs and cats, can be wonderful companions, but some transmit diseases to people. Diseases may occur when people come into accidental contact with a parasite's (worm) eggs. To protect yourself from getting sick from animal diseases:

- ✓ Wash your hands with running water and soap after contact with pets and their stool.
- ✓ Remove pet droppings from your yard at least two to three times a week.
- ✓ Wash all fruits and vegetables thoroughly before you or your children eat them.
- ✓ Do not allow children to go barefoot, sit, or lie in areas where they may be exposed to animal stools.
- ✓ Remove waste from cat litter boxes daily and wash your hands afterward.
- ✓ Avoid rough play with cats and dogs to prevent scratches and bites.
- ✓ Do not drink water from streams or other sources that may be contaminated with animal stools.
- ✓ Keep your pets free of fleas.
- ✓ Avoid picking up wild/stray animals.



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.