

ZOONOTIC DISEASES

What are zoonotic diseases?

Owning a pet can be a wonderful, rewarding experience for you and your family. However, pets can transmit diseases that may be harmful to humans- especially young children and people with certain medical conditions. These are called zoonotic diseases or zoonoses (pronounced zoo-NO-sees).

Zoonotic disease that affect people

Cat Scratch Disease- Also known as “cat scratch fever,” this flea borne infection is typically transmitted from cat’s scratch or bite. Signs include pimples at the scratch site and swollen lymph nodes that may persist for six weeks or longer.

Leptospirosis- “Lepto” is a bacterial disease spread by contact with urine from an infected animal, including dogs, raccoons, squirrels and skunks. Lepto can cause high fever, severe headache, vomiting and, if left untreated, kidney damage or liver failure.

Rabies-This well-known disease is caused by a virus found in the saliva of infected animals and transmitted to people by bites. It is invariably fatal if not promptly treated.

Ringworm- Ringworm is a fungal infection-not a worm-transmitted by contact with the skin or fur of an infected dog or cat. Signs include a bald patch of scaly skin on the scalp, or a ring-shaped, itchy rash on the skin.



Roundworms (Toxocariasis) - is an infection caused by parasitic roundworms found in the intestines of dogs and cats. Symptoms in humans may be produced by the presence of the larval worms migrating in parts of the body. Infections can cause an eye disease that occurs when a microscopic worm enters the eye; it may cause inflammation and formation of a scar on the retina. Each year more than 700 people infected with *Toxocara* experience permanent partial loss of vision. You or your children can become infected after accidentally ingesting (swallowing) infective *Toxocara* eggs in soil or other contaminated surfaces.

Sarcoptic Mange (Scabies) - is a very itchy disease caused by a small mite not visible to the naked eye. Areas where the mites tend to burrow under the skin

include the tips of the ears, elbows, hocks, chest and belly. However, in a severe infestation, mites can cause problems on the animal's entire body. This disease is highly contagious and can spread from pet to pet or from pet to human.

SIMPLE WAYS TO PROTECT YOUR FAMILY



Wash your hands with soap and water after touching, playing with or caring for pets.

- ✓ Never touch the stool of any animal without wearing disposable gloves.
- ✓ Do not kiss your pet or let your pet lick your face.
- ✓ Do daily "tick checks" on yourself, your kids and your pet. If you find a tick, use tweezers to slowly pull it out. Immerse the tick in rubbing alcohol, apply antiseptic to the bitten area and wash your hands.
- ✓ If you are pregnant, ask someone else in the family to clean the cat's litter box. If you must do it yourself, wear gloves and immediately wash your hands after changing the litter.
- ✓ Wash your hands after gardening or working in soil where pets may have relieved themselves.
- ✓ If you are scratched or bitten, wash the area with soap and water right away and contact your physician.
- ✓ See your veterinarian and make sure your pet is protected against zoonoses and other disease threats in your area

PROVEN WAYS TO PROTECT YOUR PET

Many zoonotic diseases can be prevented by vaccination. Vaccines are now available to protect against Leptospirosis, Lyme disease, rabies and giardia. In addition, twice-a-year wellness exams performed by Dr. Travis/Tiller can help detect and treat zoonotic infections before they become serious, or are transmitted to other pets or people in your household.

Don't forget to take these other steps to protect your pet:

- ✓ Ask our staff about flea and tick control
- ✓ Brush and inspect your pet for ticks after each outing
- ✓ Do not let your pet drink from standing water outdoors
- ✓ Do not let your pet come into contact with feces or urine of other animals
- ✓ Remove food, garbage or nesting materials that may attract wildlife

