

Public Health Information for Petting Zoos and Animal Exhibitions

General Information

- ◆ Animals, especially those that are young and ill, may carry microorganisms that can cause diarrhea and other gastrointestinal symptoms in humans.
- ◆ These microorganisms are shed in an animal's feces and, sometimes, saliva. After shedding, they may also survive in an animal's environment.
- ◆ Organisms of concern include Salmonella, Campylobacter, E. coli and Cryptosporidium parvum.
- ◆ Only touch or feed animals in designated areas. Always ask owners for permission to touch exhibited animals.

*HAND TO MOUTH CONTACT AFTER TOUCHING
ANIMALS AND THEIR ENVIRONMENT IS A HEALTH RISK.
ALWAYS WASH HANDS PRIOR TO EATING.*

Prevention is easy. Follow these recommendations:

- ◆ **Always** wash hands with soap and running water before eating.
- ◆ Wash hands with soap and water after touching animals or their environment.
- ◆ Do NOT use baby wipes in place of handwashing as they do not kill germs like *E. coli* O157:H7.
- ◆ Avoid hand to mouth activities in livestock areas, such as eating, smoking, nail biting, carrying toys, pacifiers, etc.
- ◆ Do not drink raw milk.
- ◆ High risk individuals (children less than 5, elderly, pregnant and immune compromised people) should use heightened precautions.
- ◆ If you have additional questions about specific symptoms, risks or infections, contact your health care professional or your Public Health Agency.



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