

How to Stay Healthy at Animal Exhibits

Protect yourself from diseases like influenza (flu), *E. coli* and *Salmonella*!

Petting zoos and fairs give us exciting opportunities to interact with animals. These experiences are educational and fun, but it's important to remember that animals sometimes carry harmful germs that can make us sick. Here's what you can do to keep yourself and your family healthy and safe when visiting animal exhibits.

WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN.

- Find out where handwashing stations are located.
- Always wash your hands right after petting animals or touching anything in animal areas (where they live, roam, or eat).
- Wash your hands when you leave animal areas, even if you did not touch the animals.
- Running water and soap are best. If running water and soap are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Wash your hands with soap and water as soon as a sink is available.

EAT AND DRINK SAFELY.

- Keep food and drinks out of animal areas.
- Don't prepare, serve, or eat food in animal areas (with the exception of service animals, or animals that assist people with disabilities).
- Don't share your food with animals, to keep yourself and the animals healthy. Animals should eat the food made for them.
- Remember: Wash your hands before preparing food or drinks and before eating and drinking.



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KEEP CHILDREN SAFE AROUND ANIMALS.

- Young children are more likely to get sick from harmful germs that animals can carry. For this reason, it is recommended that children **5 years of age and younger not have contact with reptiles, amphibians, and live poultry, including baby chicks and ducklings**, because these animals are commonly associated with outbreaks of disease.
- Children **always** need adult supervision around animals.
- Never allow children to put their thumbs, fingers, or objects (like pacifiers) in their mouths when they're around animals or in an animal area.
- Encourage and supervise handwashing.
- Do not take or use strollers, bottles, pacifiers, spill-proof cups, or toys into animal areas.

Did you know?

Pigs can carry influenza (flu). People at high risk of serious flu complications should avoid contact with pigs and should not enter swine barns.

These groups include:

- **Children younger than 5 years**
- **People older than 65 years**
- **Pregnant women**
- **People with certain long-term health conditions (like asthma and other lung disease, diabetes, heart disease, weakened immune systems, and neurological or neurodevelopmental conditions)**



For more information on staying healthy around animals, check out these websites:

<https://www.in.gov/isdh/25809.htm>

<https://www.cdc.gov/features/fairsandfood/index.html>

<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/dtopics/animal/animal.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/swineflu/h3n2v-basics.htm>



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