

Animals . . .

. . . and Your Child's Health

A



Amphibians and Reptiles

including frogs, toads, newts, lizards, salamanders, turtles, tortoises, and snakes

B



Birds

including parrots, parakeets, canaries, cockateils, finches, chickens, ducks, and geese

C



Cats

including adult cats and kittens

D



Dogs

including adult dogs and puppies

E



Exotic Animals

including sugar gliders, hedgehogs, wallabies, wolf-dog hybrids, and wild animals

F



Farm Animals

including cows, horses, ponies, pigs, goats, sheep, llamas, and alpacas

G



Guinea Pigs and Pocket Pets

including ferrets, gerbils, hamsters, rats, mice, rabbits, and chinchillas

Animals carry germs, even when they appear healthy. Germs can be carried on the animal's hair, mouth, manure, drinking water, or enclosure.

There are at least 30 different diseases that can be passed from animals to humans, including:

- Campylobacter
- Cryptosporidia
- E. coli (STEC)
- Giardia
- Leptospirosis
- Psittacosis
- Rabies
- Ringworm
- Salmonella
- Toxoplasmosis
- Worms

Children are at a higher risk of serious illness. To help prevent illness when interacting with animals or visiting petting zoos:

- Wash hands with soap and running water after touching animal or their environment; make sure petting zoos have adequate handwashing facilities
- Know the health risks associated with the particular animal
- Keep animal environments clean and remove waste regularly
- Clean animal cages and equipment away from child areas or food preparation areas
- Take pets to the vet regularly and ensure they have the necessary vaccines
- Make sure children are well supervised around animals
- Keep children away from areas where animals relieve themselves
- Make sure children keep their hands and objects (such as pacifiers) away from their mouths while interacting with animals
- Don't kiss animals
- Avoid certain animals in child cares or households with children under the age of 5 years, including chicks, reptiles, amphibians, and ducklings
- Do not bring strollers, toys, pacifiers, or baby equipment into animal enclosures.
- Use extra precautions when going to petting zoos

For more information, contact Snohomish Health District Communicable Disease Outreach program at 425.339.5278 or visit www.snohd.org.