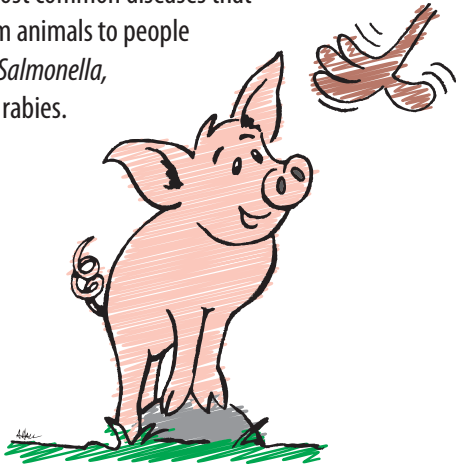


## Which diseases are typically spread from animals to people?

Some of the most common diseases that are spread from animals to people include *E. coli*, *Salmonella*, ringworm and rabies.



## Possible symptoms of diseases spread from animals to people:

- diarrhea
- bloody diarrhea
- stomach cramps
- nausea
- vomiting
- fever
- bloating
- gas

*It is advised that any person experiencing any of these symptoms up to three weeks following a visit to animals in a public setting seek medical attention.*

## Groups at increased risk:

Persons at increased risk of developing a serious illness from animals include:

- Pregnant women
- Elderly persons
- Children less than five years of age
- Persons who are mentally impaired
- Persons with weakened immune systems

*It is recommended that these persons avoid contact with animals in public settings. Children should be supervised and/or carried by an adult in the presence of animals.*

# Visiting Animals in Public Settings

(Fairs, Petting Zoos, Farms)



For more information contact

YORK REGION  
**Health Connection**  
**1-800-361-5653**  
[www.york.ca/healthconnection](http://www.york.ca/healthconnection)



Health Protection Division  
October 2007

# Visiting Animals in Public Settings

(Fairs, Petting Zoos, Farms)



Visiting animals in a public setting such as a petting zoo or farm, can be a fun and educational experience. However, diseases can be spread from animals to people if some simple precautions are not followed.

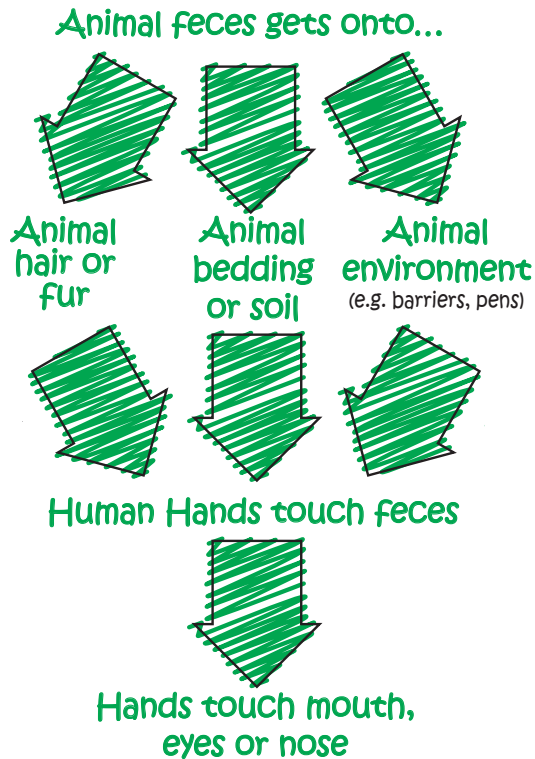
Before your trip, please review this information with staff, parents, adult supervisors and children.

## Animals of concern

Recent disease outbreaks in Canada and the United States have been associated with cows, calves, goats, sheep, pigs, rodents and poultry. The presence of certain diseases may be more common in young animals.

## How are diseases spread from animals to people?

Animals carrying disease often have no signs of illness and can continue to release or 'shed' disease into their environment. Animals carry germs in their intestines and can pass these germs to people through their feces in the following ways:



## Hand Hygiene – the key to prevention

Inadequate hand hygiene is one of the main causes of disease outbreaks associated with animals in public settings. Correct hand hygiene is the single most effective way to reduce the spread of disease. Follow these simple steps to make sure correct hand hygiene is practiced during your visit.

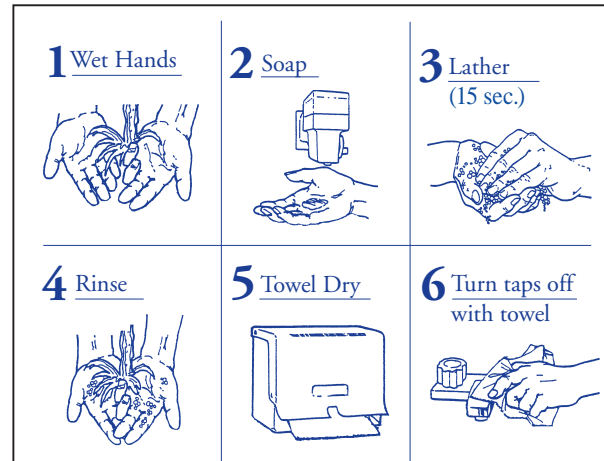
### Before your visit:

Determine if the facility you are visiting has:

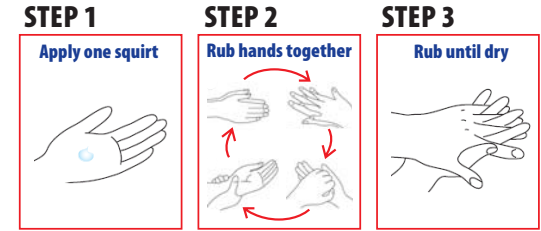
- Handwashing facilities available and accessible to both children and adults
- Running water, liquid soap, paper towels or hand sanitizer
- Adequate staff supervising in the areas where animal contact is permitted
- An eating area that is separate from the animal area

Review correct hand hygiene procedures with children, parents and adult supervisors:

### 1. Correct procedure - Handwashing:



### 2. Correct procedure - Hand sanitizer use:



#### Tips for using hand sanitizers:

Remove any visible dirt on hands before use (this may be done with a moist hand wipe)

- Choose one that contains 60-90% alcohol
- Check expiry date
- Children should be supervised at all times while they are using hand sanitizer

**Handwashing with liquid soap and water is preferred over using hand sanitizer when available. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers are not effective against ALL germs.**

### During your visit:

#### Practice good hand hygiene:

- After touching or feeding an animal
- Immediately upon leaving animal areas
- After touching an animal's environment (e.g. barriers, pens)
- Before eating or drinking
- After cleaning and/or removing boots or shoes
- After using the toilet

## tips:

- Discourage hand-to-mouth activities while in animal areas (e.g. thumb-sucking, use of pacifiers and bottles, smoking, eating, drinking)
- Ensure there are an appropriate number of adult supervisors to keep a close eye on children.
- Eat before you go on your visit
- Do NOT use baby wipes in place of handwashing as they do not kill germs like E. coli.